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Dando Voz a la Comunidad:
Including Undocumented Immigrants in U.S. City Planning

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Dando Voz a la Comunidad:
Including Undocumented Immigrants in U.S. City Planning

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Abstract

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The purpose of this research is to better understand why undocumented immigrants do not typically participate in U.S. city planning processes, and present recommendations for improved inclusion. This report provides a brief background into the presence of undocumented immigrants in the U.S., their unique civic organization, and the need to include them in the planning of our cities and communities. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, (currently under the adoption process by the City of Austin, Texas) serves as a case study for the report. East Riverside is an area that is predominantly Hispanic and home to a large stock of immigrant workforce housing, yet the plan's public participation phase saw little to no contributions from the zone's low-income immigrant residents. Austin city planners' perspectives are presented in the report, as are the views and ideas of undocumented women who live in East Riverside low-income housing. Suggestions for re-conceptualizing the planning discipline are presented, as well as general tools for how city planners could better include undocumented immigrants.

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PART I

Chapter 1: Undocumented Immigrants & U.S. City Planning

Introduction

The undocumented immigrant worker and his or her family are staple residents of today's U.S. cities. A 2008 report estimated that there were 11.9 million undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., signifying that they make up 4% of the nation's population (Pew Hispanic Center, 2008).[1] They are estimated to be 5.4% of the nation's workforce– the men lay the foundations in construction projects that are re-shaping our urban existence, and the women contribute to local economies through their labor & spending. The children of undocumented immigrants, of whom about 73% are U.S. citizens by birth, make up an estimated 6.8% of the students enrolled in the nation's elementary and secondary schools. The nationwide numbers are indeed much different in regions and cities with high concentrations of immigrants; at the neighborhood level, the undocumented are potentially the majority in some areas of the country. While these individuals play an integral part in the day-to-day function of our nation's cities, their

[1] No government agency records the number of undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. The numbers presented here are the most recent estimates released by the Pew Hispanic Center in March 2008. These estimates are arrived at through the use of a widely accepted method of subtracting the estimated legal immigrant population from the total foreign-born population (quantities gained from General Census as well as Current Population Surveys). Since the CPS is a sample survey, the estimates are subject to sample error. Each estimate is a midpoint from a range of possible values that could be the true value, and should therefore only be used to indicate general trends.

needs (like those of other minority groups) are often not taken into serious account in the formation of city and neighborhood plans.

Undocumented immigrants are, more than any other under-represented group, truly invisible. They are so invisible that we all (scholars, policy-makers, even immigrants themselves) have a hard time determining just how vast their numbers are. It doesn't help that no U.S. government agency—not even the Census Bureau—keeps track of the number of undocumented immigrants living in the country, much less in distinct regions and cities. In addition, many fail to report *any* information to the Census Bureau, due to a widespread fear that it could result in deportation (Bahadur, 2000). How are city planners—who are trained in extracting census data, projecting future populations, and more—expected to take into account the needs of a group of city dwellers that they cannot even account for in their demographic analysis? This report examines how undocumented immigrants could be better incorporated into city planning by presenting the perceptions of undocumented immigrants as well as those of city planners. I provide a critical analysis of the planning discipline's inclusionary practices (or lack thereof), while also concluding with some practical recommendations for city planners seeking participation from undocumented immigrants.

In addition to being largely unaccounted for in demographic analysis, the undocumented are a particularly vulnerable sub-group. The estimated median household income for undocumented immigrants nationwide was $36,000 for 2007, compared to $50,000 for U.S.-born residents. It is also important to note that, due to their status,

undocumented immigrants are not likely to increase their incomes significantly during the time they live and work in the US (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). The poverty rate for undocumented immigrant adults is nearly twice that of U.S.-born adults, as is the poverty rate for their children twice that of children with U.S.-born parents. Studies have also shown undocumented immigrant adults to be disproportionately poorly educated and uninsured (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Undocumented immigrants tend to work as day laborers or in downgraded industries with wages at or below poverty level, in substandard conditions, which, due to their legal status, they most often do not contest. Rising costs of living in U.S. cities, along with poverty level wages exacerbate the already numerous hardships faced by the undocumented: lack of affordable housing, inadequate access to schools, and unmet basic needs (Theodore & Martin, 2007).

Due to their economic and legal status, undocumented immigrants are likely to live in neighborhoods with low-rent multi-family housing, and in clusters where they have access to their culturally preferred resources. Like other low-income areas, the neighborhoods where the undocumented live are particularly vulnerable to gentrification and 'urban renewal' initiatives targeted at areas perceived as 'blighted.' Traditional 'port of entry' neighborhoods have recently been subject to intense real-estate speculation that often has the effect of diminishing the affordable housing options of low-income immigrants (Diaz, 2005). There are numerous social costs to the displacement of undocumented immigrants due to gentrification. Displacement from centrally located, traditionally low-income areas separates undocumented immigrants from their social networks and from ethnic stores and other cultural resources they may use. Perhaps more

of an issue, displacement can create severe obstacles for an undocumented immigrant who must seek day labor in a central urban area. Since job security is mostly non-existent for undocumented immigrants, being forced to move further away from a job could mean losing employment. Decreased access to necessary public transit and social services are also major consequences of displacement for undocumented immigrants. The undocumented are therefore especially vulnerable to the actions of developers and city planners, and successful inclusion of them in the participatory planning stage could potentially increase their "visibility" and prevent their displacement, insuring a more inclusive urban environment with housing and accessibility for its workforce population.

Much of the existing research on immigrants and city planning concerns cases of *retroactive* inclusion—that is, instances in which immigrants were taken into account due to a particularly controversial issue surrounding ordinances or plans that had already been adopted (Harwood & Myers, 2002). This study illustrates one case, in the East Riverside neighborhood of Austin, Texas, where a group of undocumented immigrants became involved in the public planning process, albeit in a later stage than the initial public participatory sessions.

As noted above, this report asks how we can better incorporate undocumented immigrants into the planning process from the start—rather than retroactively. It uses the case of a planning effort in an Austin neighborhood that is home to a large community of undocumented immigrants to explore these issues. Chapter 2 outlines a brief summary of the research and theory on multi-cultural and inclusionary planning. Chapter 3 gives a

review of reasons why undocumented immigrants may not be politically or civilly integrated, as well as provides background into the rising 'migrant civil society network' across US cities. A brief summary of the immigrant-serving network in Austin is also provided in Chapter 3 in order to bring into focus the case study. While the existing organizations do not have explicit ties to the city planning process in Austin, some suggestions are proposed for where networking could begin.

Part II of the report presents a case study, beginning with Chapter 4's background on the city planning process & role of public input in Austin, with particular emphasis on the East Riverside neighborhood. Chapter 5 then narrates the views of Austin planners in respect to the lack of participation they see from undocumented immigrants. The perceptions and ideas of a select group of undocumented women from the East Riverside area are then presented in Chapter 6. Finally, Chapter 7 attempts to synthesize the theory and models presented in Part I with the data collected from planners and migrants in Part II in order to give final recommendations.

Introduction to the Case Study Area: East Riverside Neighborhood

The geographical area referred to in this report as the East Riverside Neighborhood is actually a conglomeration of portions from a few neighborhood planning areas, with the distinguishing characteristic that they all surround a major corridor created by East Riverside Drive, a wide commercial thoroughfare that connects the Austin downtown area to the west with the Austin-Bergstrom International Airport to

the east. The corridor zone lies immediately south of the Colorado River (renamed Lady Bird Lake in the inner areas of the city) and is bordered by East Riverside Drive's intersections with the major Interstate Highway 35 (IH-35) to the west and State Highway 71 (SH 71) to the east. The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan (ERCMP) has defined a specific study area of approximately 1,000 acres surrounding East Riverside Drive, extending beyond the thoroughfare in sections ¼-½ mile long. In general, the background information presented in this report concerning number of facilities, businesses, housing units, etc., pertains to the specific study area, and is borrowed from the ERCMP's 'Existing Conditions' research. The demographic data for the area presented in this report comes from the zip code district (78741) that the corridor sits within (the actual zip code covers a larger geographic area than the corridor).

Low-rise commercial strip malls with expansive surface parking and very few pedestrian amenities line much of East Riverside Drive. The retail buildings are typically older developments that may have underused and vacant space. While the area's built environment may be described by planners as 'auto dominated,' a visit to the zone is quick to show that pedestrians are nonetheless present, arriving at bus stops, traversing large parking lots or sidewalk-less curbs, and crossing the multi-lane East Riverside Drive as cars zoom by.

One cannot travel through the district without noting the presence of Spanish-language commercial signs and Mexican-influenced restaurants and retail locales. Both small and large retail services in the area cater to the large immigrant population. For

example, the main grocery store chain, H.E.B., located at a prominent intersection on East Riverside Drive, feels much like an H.E.B. in Mexico, with imported products and employees and customers conducting transactions in Spanish. A warehouse-like commercial space and its expansive parking lot near the center of the corridor area hosts the weekly *pulga* (flea market), where independent vendors sell culturally preferred items at low prices to the immigrant residents. The population for the 78741 zip code was estimated to be 57.1% Hispanic for the year 2008. The ERCMP states that demographic trends suggest that the East Riverside population will increase primarily from a growth in the Hispanic population and secondarily from non-Hispanic White and Asian in-migration. In addition, the median family income of the area (determined by census tract data) is below that of the city. Household level data further emphasizes the relative poverty in the area, indicating that around 10% of the households in the corridor earn less that $15,000 annually (City of Austin, *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan November 2009 Draft*, p. 115). This could be higher when factoring in the large amount of immigrant households who may not report their incomes or complete census and survey inquiries.

The East Riverside neighborhood is home to a larger stock of low-rent multi-family housing than the greater city average, and is recognized as one of Austin's major centrally located clusters of workforce and student housing. In the third quarter of 2009, average rent in the Southeast quadrant of the city (which includes, but is not limited to the East Riverside Corridor), was $666, while average rent for the Austin MSA was $793 (City of Austin, *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan November 2009 Draft*). A recent

study conducted by the City of Austin revealed the ERCMP study area to be home to 32 multifamily housing complexes of 50 units or more. The study concluded that none of the 32 complexes were affordable to individuals making below 30% MFI, but the majority of them were affordable to those making 30-50% MFI.[2] Some of these complexes are affordable at their market-rate, which the ERCMP attributes to a general affordability in the area due to it's aging housing stock, increased crime, and economic disinvestment trends. Additionally, 8 of these complexes received public subsidies, resulting in 1,724 affordable units, which comprise 23% of the total units in the zone. This is a significant percentage, especially when considering that the East Riverside Corridor is home to approximately 11% of Austin's subsidized housing, while its estimated population is only 1% of the city at large. Additionally, the area contains an impressive 16% (1,440 units) of Austin's total units provided through the state's Housing Tax Credit program. Finally, the median year that the 32 complexes with more than 50 units were built is 1985, signifying that many of the structures are aging and perhaps more vulnerable to demolition (City of Austin, *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan November 2009 Draft*).

[2] Housing is defined as 'affordable' when no more than one third of a household's income is going toward rent/mortgage and utilities. MFI (Median Family Income) is an indicator planner's use to categorize income levels. Under 30% MFI is considered very low income, while 30-50% MFI is low income. Austin's current MFI is $73,300. It is important to note the cultural relativity of the planning discipline's definition of 'affordability.' When I once showed the city issued MFI chart to a group of immigrant women in Riverside, they said, "We're not even on that chart!" Due to their typically large family sizes and extremely low household incomes, they are *significantly* below the 30% MFI indicator, which is the lowest category displayed on the chart. The very low-income immigrant community tends to cope with poverty situations by housing a number of family members in one apartment, and often still paying more than a third of their income on housing. Also, what they term *accesible* (while also meaning 'accessible,' it is the nearest translation to 'affordable'), may be very different than what planners or private developers term 'affordable.'

In fact, significant redevelopment is already beginning to occur in the district, especially at the edges closest to Highway 35/downtown and Lady Bird Lake. The area's proximity to downtown Austin and the lake (with it's extensive trail system and parkland), as well as its potential as an airport-to-downtown route, are all attractive factors that have led to recent speculation and interest in development. As property values continue to rise, it is likely that skyrocketing property taxes will pressure more owners to sell-out to developers and the area could see further demolitions of affordable complexes, to be replaced by luxury condominiums. Many in the public and private sector see this redevelopment as inevitable; the 'modernizing' or 'renewal' of an aging, 'blighted' zone that holds so much more potential in real estate terms. As described in Chapter 6, those who live in the area have family and friends who've already been displaced and they are *very* aware of the looming threat that they may loose their residences in an area they call home.

This current redevelopment, along with interests in creating a transit rail along East Riverside Drive and a request made through the area's neighborhood planning process, all led City Council to commission the ERCMP, which will be discussed more in Chapter 4. The plan is an effort to guide private development, to encourage a district that provides more mixed-used, pedestrian, amenities, transit options, connectivity, and access to green space, among other things. Planners may see the area as "underutilized commercial corridor" (City of Austin, *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan November 2009 Draft*, p. 16), while residents view it as the only place they can afford to live and access their preferred and necessary resources (schools, social services, job

opportunities). In general, very low-income immigrant residents think the amenities and benefits outlined for future development of East Riverside are an automatic indication that there will no longer be any place for them there. The challenge for inclusive planning of the area is not just mitigating private market forces, but also reconciling the planners' valuation of the neighborhood and the immigrants' valuation of the neighborhood. This may only come through more engagement and inclusion of the undocumented in the planning process.

Clarification of Terms & Scope

The report uses the term *undocumented immigrants* to refer to individuals who immigrated to the U.S. without proper authorization, or who entered with a visa but then stayed past its expiration. Other terms used to refer to this are *unauthorized* or *illegal immigrants.* The colloquial expression used by many such individuals themselves translates to 'one without papers,' which is used in the contexts of the interview data collected.

The terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* are used interchangeably in this report and refer to individuals whose heritage is from Spanish-speaking cultures. Such individuals may be U.S. or foreign-born, and those who are immigrants are not necessarily undocumented.

Finally, the scope of the term undocumented immigrant must be modified for the purposes of this study. In many regions, especially those with geographic proximity to

Mexico, undocumented immigrants are implied to be Mexican. The vast majority (59%) of undocumented immigrants are from Mexico, which contributes to this common misperception (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). The immigrant women who participated in this study are all from Mexico. Therefore, the data collected from them must be put into local context and not construed to represent the universal term *undocumented immigrant*.

Methodology & Limitations

Data for this report was collected through surveying planning and other related literature as well as conducting direct fieldwork, primarily in the form of semi-structured interviews. A qualitative research approach was most appropriate for this study since it is exploratory and focuses on understanding the perceptions of a largely unstudied group. Chapter 5 highlights the information gained from a meeting with five planners (as well as email correspondence with one additional planner). An interview guide was provided to the planners prior to the meeting, which allowed them to collect their thoughts and facilitate the conversation themselves. This interview guide is provided in Appendix A.

Chapter 6 narrates the perceptions that I gained from conversing with six undocumented immigrant women who live in or have lived in the East Riverside area. The women I interviewed were all residents of the East Riverside neighborhood and were initially chosen to participate in an ongoing study of displacement because of they had been directly affected by redevelopment in the area. The semi-structured interview format allowed me to ask pre-planned questions (provided in Appendix B) in order to

prompt conversation surrounding the pertinent topics. The interviews were not held in order to conduct a 'survey', nor did they require any strict number of responses from each participant. The intent was rather to collect themes and insightful quotes from the each participant in an informal, non-threatening conversation. I have spent additional time with the women in weekly 'community organizing' meetings, a few citywide meetings, and further voluntary socializing; the trends I present in this report are also informed by this extensive interaction and time spent in the East Riverside neighborhood.

The semi-structure interview questions for the immigrant women were integrated into the interview guide for the study **"**Integrated Social and Ecological Assessments of Re-located Low-Income Households, Austin, Texas." Drs. Elizabeth Mueller & Sarah Dooling in the Community & Regional Planning at the UT School of Architecture are directing this study. I conducted all the interviews myself, and once was accompanied by another student-assistant on the "Re-located Low-Income Households" study; all pertinent protocol concerning confidentiality and storage of data, etc. was followed for the fieldwork of report as well as its parent study. The select questions from the interview guide that were used directly for this report are included in the Appendix.

The principle limitation I faced was time, as the semester timeline allowed approximately one month to schedule, conduct, and transcribe the interviews. I was fortunate to have already built some rapport with women in the target group through community organizing efforts and the outreach for the "Re-located Low-Income Households" study. Nevertheless, it took significant time to build an extensive enough

network to access additional potential participants and gain their commitment to schedule and keep an interview. The 'snowball sampling' method I used poses limitations to the scope of the study, as does the very small number of participants. For this reason, the data collected is presented in a qualitative scope, serving to 'tell the story' of this particular sub-group of undocumented and under-represented women. The results from the interviews do not claim to make any firm conclusions about undocumented nationwide, or even citywide. They are most useful for surfacing issues to address in further research.

Chapter 2: 'Multi-cultural planning' review with special focus on immigrants

There is a vast collection of recent literature that critiques the planning discipline as being dominated by a rational and ethno-centric discourse that leads to exclusionary practices. Such critique calls for more inclusive planning that reaches out to or even advocates for the under-represented. In their brief introduction to the subject, Pestieau & Wallace (2003) comment that there is an emerging literature that calls for planners to respond to ethno-culturally diverse groups, but significantly less research available on *how* planners can do so or have done so.

An all-encompassing review of such literature is beyond the scope of this paper, but I will provide a very brief summary of pertinent theoretical trends to give context to this report. This overarching research addresses the issue of 'ethno-cultural' groups and planning, with a specific look at immigrant groups. Finally, I will conclude by presenting some of the suggestions put forth by authors for confronting the challenges posed by planning for immigrants and other minority groups.

Planning and 'Ethno-Cultural' Groups

Scholarship that challenges the supposed universality of conventional planning theory has been building since the 1960s, beginning principally with Paul Davidoff's introduction of advocacy planning. This scholarship has taken on many trends since

Davidoff's early theories of a rational concept of inclusionary planning that called for a multi-stakeholder process where planners advocate for and present the needs and desires of various sub-groups (most importantly, the minorities and under-represented) (Brooks, 2002).

The resulting body of theory has criticized planning as a discipline that emerged out of an Enlightenment ideology, dominated by what Sandercock (1998, p. 62) identified as the five pillars of the historic model: "rationality; comprehensiveness; scientific method; faith in state-directed futures; and faith in planners' ability to know what is good for people generally, 'the public interest.'" Sandercock and others who have expounded on this critique have "revealed how planning practice is not immune to various forms of social bias, but indeed is deeply invested in those, since they maintain social hierarchies on which the profession depends" (Miraftab & McConnell, 2008).

Fenster (1998) provides a helpful description of how postmodern critical theory created a shift in planning from what she refers to as "procedural planning" to "pluralist planning." Procedural planning is modern and rational, and rooted in an assimilationist approach, in which planners pay "attention to differences among those for whom plans are made only in terms of their deviation from the norm" (Fenster, 1998, p. 198). Pluralist planning, on the other hand, is tied to postmodern theory and encompasses particularity and the local. Pluralist approaches that Fenster cites are advocacy planning, negotiated planning, critical planning and radical planning—it is essentially, "planning for multiple publics" (Sandercock & Forsyth as quoted in Fenster, 1998).

The dawn of plurality and multiculturalism in planning is essentially a stated allowance of those who are 'different' to embody their ethno-cultural traditions as they participate in the public sphere. The concept of global multiculturalism is largely accepted, even if it is, as Burayidi (2003) states, sometimes only a "veneer of civic tolerance." Nonetheless, this veneer means, "for urban America…the needs of ethno-cultural groups can no longer be ignored in the framing of urban policy and planning" (Burayidi, 2003, p. 259).

Planning in multi-cultural settings is additionally susceptible to (re)producing social hierarchies (Sandercock, 1998; Miraftab & McConnell, 2008). Some of the ethnographic examples discussed in the *Planning & Immigrants* section below showcase how supposedly neutral planning practices (like occupancy rates) are, in a multi-cultural setting, actually discriminatory. Pluralist strategies must not make differences invisible, because this is where discrimination emerges. In addition, planners must be cognizant of structures of power and inequality, which runs counter to the rational disciplinary background discussed earlier: "planners are accustomed to viewing people as public citizens with equal rights, making rational decisions, and subordinating their parochial interests for the welfare of society as a whole" (Burayidi, 2003, p. 260). And, while some planners may purport to improve equity, their own political positionality, combined with deep-seated inequalities, prevents them from truly changing the status quo (Harwood, 2005). In other instances, planners may not attempt to reach out in order to include under-represented groups so as to not 'bias' the process of planning by considering the needs of a specific user group (Pestieau & Wallace, 2003).

Planning & Immigrants: Challenges

Under the umbrella of minority or under-represented groups, some scholars have commented on the particular problem of US planners' inadequate involvement in immigrant communities (Vitiello, 2009; Burayidi, 2003; Friedmann, 1997). Vitiello comments that while the 19th-century movements which spurred planning (tenement reform, settlement houses, etc.) were largely concerned with immigrants, the history of the field has seen an uneven and shifting relationship between practitioners and immigrants. In addition, while the U.S. has always been diverse, the last half-century has seen dramatic cultural differences due to immigrants increasingly coming from Non-European countries, and planners have had to cope with the changing ethnic customs surrounding urban space and facilities (Burayidi, 2003).

Indeed, much of the literature traditionally available on integrating immigrants into official planning of today is in reference to European countries, or other major immigrant-receiving nations, like Canada and Australia. Sandercock comments that the US is more like France because of a historical discourse of assimilation which causes the nation to refuse to declare itself a 'multicultural society'—while Australia and Canada are officially declared 'multicultural societies' and back it up with the appropriate policy adjustments (Sandercock, 2003). Some European countries have established traditions of social planning that include specific agencies for national immigrant integration, while in the U.S. migrant concerns have largely been left to social workers and other community development organizers, as opposed to planners. In fact, few planning

departments have even recognized immigrants as a major priority, despite the fact that their plans, ordinances, etc. can have a major impact on immigrant communities (Vitiello, 2009). Harwood & Myers (2002, p. 367) note that "embracing immigrants remains politically hazardous" for planners, because in the U.S. many associate immigrants with urban blight and other concepts seen as negative to land use planning. In addition, illegal immigration is such a hot button political issue in the U.S. that planners may not want to risk being perceived as advocating for undocumented immigrants.

For this reason precisely, the commentary that is available concerning U.S. planning and immigrants typically concerns the consequences of "culturally insensitive" planning measures in immigrant-dominated neighborhoods:

> The Anglo-American tradition of rational regulatory planning struggles to accommodate cultural difference. Planning standards for conditions such as overcrowding and blight, coupled with migrants' frequent poverty and lack of power, have resulted in displacement and exclusion, but have also inspired community mobilization and reinvestment. (Vitiello, 2009, p. 246)

Burayidi (2003) cites various ethnographic studies that reveal cultural differentiations into how space is used within the home, most notably concerning the number of family members who dwell within one room or unit. Asian households tend to have a cultural preference for living in tighter quarters, and Mexican sleeping arrangements among family members are often much closer than mainstream U.S. preferences. The implications point to the importance of understanding the cultural

difference immigrants bring to the table when devising planning policy such as occupancy rates. Other similar commentary on conflicting cultural realities and their effect on planning policy has arisen on issues such as use of residential outdoor space, street vending, home temples, commercial signage, etc. Vitiello (2009, p. 251) comments: "…practitioners' limited success in mediating disputes about overcrowding, immigrants' use of public space, and design of a particular groups' housing or mosques reveals the limits of multiculturalism in U.S. planning practices."

Harwood (2005) researched three controversial land use decisions that took place in Orange County, California, in the mid to late 1990s, all of which were culturally discriminatory toward either Hispanic or Asian immigrant groups. She reviewed countless city council and planning commission meeting minutes, ordinances, and interviewed city planners as well as community leaders. Harwood (2005, p. 367) concluded, "Planners often fail to represent those of their constituents who are politically underrepresented." She harks back to critical theory here, noting that, by doing this, planners are not maintaining neutrality. They are even acting politically in choosing what information to translate and electing when to solicit community participation. Many planners justified this to her as a "business as usual" approach, because they were merely reinforcing locally accepted planning practices and trends. Harwood warns against a "business as usual" approach as the U.S. only grows in diversity and immigrant numbers, and concludes her study by acknowledging the comments of one planner who seemed to agree with her:

> Being a "business as usual" planner means just presenting "the facts" and leaving their interpretation to the decision makers to figure out what they need to do. But one planner suggested what others have long argued, that planners should be the "brave ones" who bring into the open what people do not want to hear, to serve the possibility of community moving forward (p. 368).

Where do we go from here?

The above examples of U.S. planning and its inadequacy to address the needs of a multicultural society are used to provide context to the discussion of immigrants & participatory planning efforts. Vitiello (2009) comments that U.S. scholars in the planning field are just now beginning to take into consideration the impact of immigrants on the discipline. He notes the many challenges of immigrants of today, citing one as the fact that many arrive undocumented, a phenomenon that the planning discipline has rarely reflected on. As academics just begin to take on these topics, practitioners "still struggle to make sense of what immigration might mean for their work;" in fact, public planning departments lack direct interaction with immigrant communities, and planning graduate programs that offer courses on immigration are almost non-existent (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, University of Southern California, and University of Pennsylvania are noted exceptions) (Vitiello, 2009, p. 251).

Sandercock (2003, p. 321) identifies a theoretical shift that is occurring in the most recent literature available on incorporating immigrants into planning, which she tags

interculturalism. In an attempt to reconcile some of the failed attempts of planning in a multicultural setting, *interculturalism* calls for shared activities, not just shared space: "a truly multicultural society not only supports community organizations within immigrant groups but also works to incorporate migrants into cross-cultural activities, dialogues, and organizations" (p. 321).

In order for city planning in the U.S. to foster *interculturalism*, and avoid some of the mistakes of the past, the existing research provides suggestions for increasing inclusion in what I identify as four broad areas: planning scholarship & education, individual practitioners' actions, host societies' attitudes, and measures passed by city & elected officials. The call for increasing planning scholarship on pluralistic planning is in many ways a call to 'open up' the discipline to include sectors that really are already performing planning-related activities for immigrants & other marginalized groups:

> The scholarship aiming for inclusive and plural planning recognizes the value of ethnographic; participatory, and action-based research; has expanded its constituency beyond officials and bureaucrats to include marginalized communities, grassroots and civil society organizations; has redefined its responsibilities beyond rational problem solving to helping communities participate in decision making (participatory planning) (Miraftab & McConnell, 2008, p. 346).

Bollens (2002) calls for further opening up of the planning discipline, to recognize and include concepts of ethnic identity, territoriality, and community identity

and symbolism as part of the urban landscape. There is also a need for planning education to "retool and re-conceptualize" the planning profession so that it deals more directly with ethnic and cultural differences brought on by immigration (Bollens 2002). The only substantive mention of undocumented immigration that I found in my survey of planning literature appears in a very recent study by Miraftab & McConnell (2008). It is, basically, calling for more increased attention from the planning discipline concerning this particular phenomena of legality:

> While much of the planning theory concerns mediation between the state and society, the schisms within society consider race, gender, class, ethnicity, and sexuality, but pay less attention to legal status as a fault line that distinguishes citizens' entitlements not only within a city and town, but even within a single family. In its state-society mediation, planning theory must deal more with the question of legality. In Riverbend, for example, the fear of deportation is a heavy burden that constrains association with undocumented friends and family members. The resulting deep caution is an important factor in immigrants' non-participation in the structures of liberal democracy and decision-making. (p. 355)

A retooling of the planning discipline to include such phenomena as an increasing undocumented population would hopefully lead to the production of what Thompson (2003) calls the "culturally inclusive planner." Thompson discusses Australian case studies of successful integration of immigrant needs into planning, and she recognizes the role of progressive, culturally diverse politicians, but also speaks to the perhaps more

important "enthusiasm, passion, and commitment" (p. 289) of individual planners. The four main aspects that Thompson lists as essential to the culturally inclusive planner are as follows: reflective practitioner, culturally aware practitioner, informed problem solver, and campaigner for social justice. The reflective practitioner nurtures a constant internal dialogue between personal development and professional actions, recognizing the weight that prejudices and values may carry in professional decisions and actions. The culturally aware practitioner has been exposed personally to different groups of city inhabitants through a planning curriculum that requires diversity training as well as education in effective communication, conflict resolution, and cultural knowledge and sensitivity. A culturally inclusive planner must also be open to exploring new and innovative ways to conduct research and work with communities—she's an informed problem solver who is not afraid to use qualitative methods that challenge planning's rational orthodoxy. Finally, the culturally inclusive planner strives for social justice to aid in transforming structures of power and privilege, while keeping in mind his own power in relation to those he is 'planning for.'

Sandercock (2003) points to a host of policy directions that must be taken to increase diverse participation in planning, but I will focus on just one main point here, that encapsulates the idea of host society attitude:

> A… requirement is the elaboration of new notions of citizenship, multicultural and urban, that are more responsive to newcomers' claims of rights to the city and more encouraging of their political participation on the local level. This involves

> nothing less than the openness on the part of the host societies to being redefined in the process of migrant integration… (p. 322).

She goes on to mention that this step also requires a willingness to work through the emotion, conflict, and fear, as well as attachment to status quo, that are sure to be present in this process of integration. Friedmann (1995), interestingly, provides an example of German notions of citizenship that do not exist in the US. The German language has one word meaning 'citizen' at the national level, and another word meaning 'local citizen,' that is, someone who has a certain period of time living in a locale and may therefore participate and contribute on local issues, even if he or she is officially a national-level citizen of another country. Our linguistic notions of 'citizen' and 'resident' in the U.S., especially as they relate to participatory planning concepts (i.e. the "Citizen Advisory Committee" of the new Austin Comprehensive plan), are effectively excluding those who may be long-term individuals and households who are invested residents of local areas even if they do not hold official residency or citizenship.

Finally, it would be unrealistic to propose mechanisms for increasing plurality and integration in planning without mentioning the role of the city and elected officials as the decision-makers and implementing agencies linked to policy actions. Pestieau & Wallace (2003) call for a commitment from the city and officials, not only to ensure inclusive language and outreach for diverse groups, but also to examine the assumptions that may drive their existing programs, and to put in place guidelines for the conduct of municipal planning agents.

Chapter 3: The Role of Immigrant 'Civil Society'

The previous chapter presented critical theory and practical applications on incorporating immigrants and other minorities into planning. This chapter will go a step further in analyzing exclusively *immigrant* involvement by taking a look at the concepts of political incorporation and civic engagement of immigrants, with a special focus on the role of community-based organizations. First, I will present findings on reasons for the *lack* of independent immigrant civic engagement, and then I will showcase the role of community-based organizations, or, "migrant civic society" in immigrant political incorporation. I will use these finding to present the potential connections between immigrant civic organizations and the planning discipline. Finally, I will provide a brief illustration of the immigrant civil society network present in Austin, Texas, as a transition to the case study that composes Part II of this report.

Undocumented Immigrants: Lack of Civic Engagement

For a Professional Report submitted in 2004, Katie Pearl Halloran, M.S.C.R.P. conducted extensive primary research on the factors prohibiting general civic participation of Mexican immigrants in Austin. While Halloran's focus was not on city planning-specific activities, her findings provide an invaluable foundation for this report. Halloran interviewed a number of informants who worked in entities serving immigrants

about their challenges in engaging the immigrant population. The insight of individuals whose livelihoods are working with and for undocumented immigrants aided Halloran in determining ten leading obstacles to community organization of immigrants (Halloran, 2004).

Halloran identified five key individual obstacles, as well as five societal obstacles. The individual obstacles are: (1) cultural differences and distrust, (2) immigrant status and deportation concerns, (3) employment, (4) depression and social isolation, and (5) transience and homelessness. The five societal obstacles are: (1) logistical barriers, (2) marketing and communication, (3) organizer and service provider attitudes and approaches, (4) discrimination, and (5) Homeland Security/political environment. Halloran's typology is helpful in sorting out the complex socioeconomic, legal, and emotional reality that many undocumented persons live with.

Since Halloran's study was specific to Austin, the supporting evidence for some of the above reasons will be considered in Part II of this report, where I present my own findings from interviews with immigrants and planners in Austin. For now, the ten reasons outlined above provide a good point for beginning to conceptualize the phenomenon of immigrant civic incorporation.

Role of Civic Organizations in Political Integration

Immigrants, especially the undocumented, are limited in their avenues for political participation. For all immigrants who do not become U.S. citizens, traditional voting is not available; they must exercise their political voice through non-electoral mechanisms (signing petitions, attending meetings, belonging to civic organizations or participating in activities of local community institutions such as churches or schools, demonstrating, etc.). There is an emerging literature in the role of such non-electoral participation in the daily lives of immigrants in the U.S. (Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, Theodore, 2008). Such mechanisms require some sort of community organizing, and increasingly, immigrant 'civic organizations' are the starting point for individual incorporation. A number of researchers have focused on the importance of immigrant networks, especially community based-development organizations (Cordero-Guzmán, 2005).

Cordero-Guzmán (2005, p. 894) categorizes the groups that form the "immigrant social-service delivery system" into three types: immigrant groups, associations, and clubs; non-profit immigrant organizations; and service providers with a large metropolitan-level service base. Theodore & Martin (2007) tag these community organizations as an "emerging *migrant civil society*" (p. 270), and define them further as groups who: (1) have as their mission to serve the well-being of migrants, (2) engage in numerous activities, from ESL classes, to immigrant rights advocacy, and (3) serve migrants as their main clients/constituents.

The hardships faced by immigrants covered in Chapter 1 (lack of affordable housing, substandard employment, etc.) create a significant burden, and since the undocumented have little recourse to the state, civil society has largely taken on the task of addressing such social problems (Theodore & Martin, 2007). Communal self-organization and self-help efforts that have emerged in immigrant neighborhoods are a form of social and economic integration (Cattacin, 2009, p. 259). Additionally, Harwood & Myers (2002, p. 88) claim that, "Encouraging Latinos, particularly immigrants, to participate in civic activities is key to political integration."

The research available on migrant civil society highlights what I identify as three major functions in relation to the political integration: education, leadership, and legitimacy. First, such organizations are key to raising awareness among undocumented groups concerning their rights, in addition to "policies that may affect their well-being as well as what they can do individually and collectively to participate in civic and political activities" (Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, Theodore, 2008, p. 613). In addition, such groups can provide leadership to a migrant population that is likely to be under-educated and lacking in political recourse:

> Immigrant-serving organizations are uniquely positioned to aid in the political incorporation of their constituents by understanding and framing their concerns and articulating these concerns to the political establishment. Immigrant serving organizations have the credibility and capacity to recognize the issues that matter most to immigrants and to propose policy and programmatic responses to

better meet immigrants needs. (Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, Theodore, 2008, p. 603)

And finally, the legitimacy that established organizations potentially provide is key: "Community organizations and social movements, unlike undocumented migrants, are typically seen as having standing and legitimacy to make claims on the state" (Theodore & Martin, 2007, p. 272). Thus, such organizations, having gained entrance into the migrant community most often through grassroots approaches, are able to move and negotiate among the migrant household, the state, and the market.

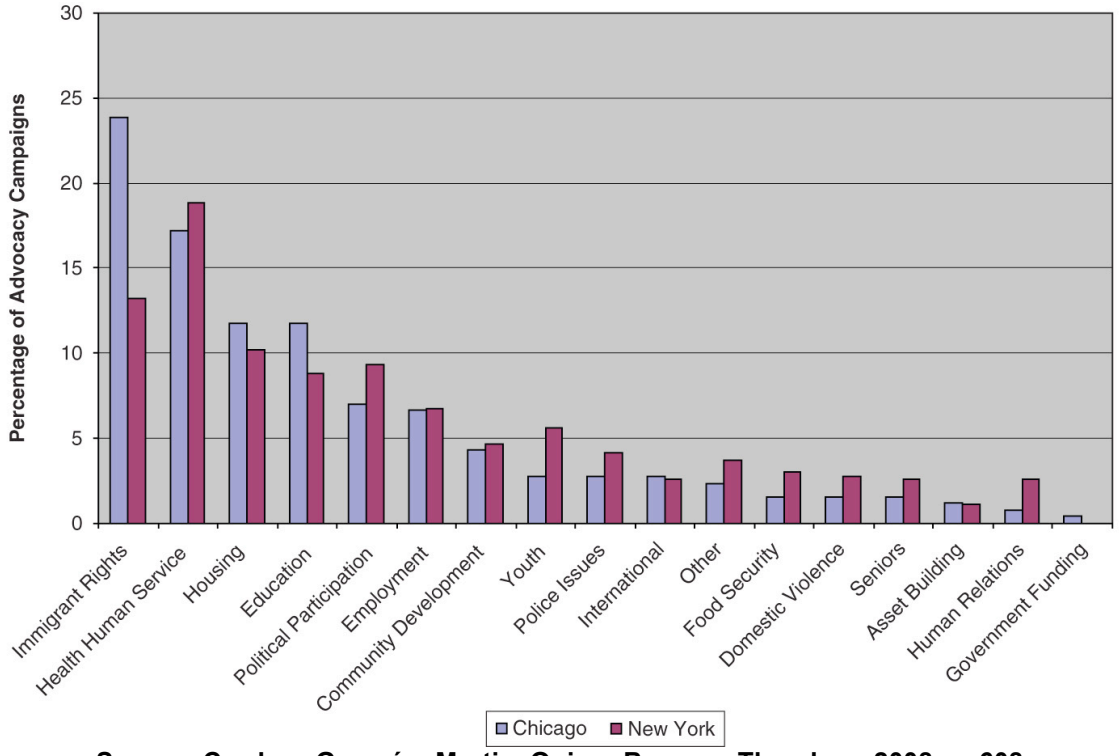
Immigrant Civic Organizations and Planning

The key point I put forth here is that immigrant civil society is *already* engaging in planning efforts, even if they are not officially associated with city planning departmental efforts. Theodore and Martin (2007) presented two case studies on successful migrant organization for affordable housing and workers' rights in Chicago, which demonstrated "some of the ways in which migrant civil society is engaging in contentious politics as a way to advance policy reforms and to offer alternatives to unfettered market-driven development" (p. 283)

An extensive survey of migrant organizations in New York and Chicago displays the priorities in policy and advocacy issues addressed by the groups (See Figure 3.1). While almost every issue is related to planning in some form, ones that are particularly

notable are health & human services, housing, community development, and food security.

Figure 3.1 Policy & Advocacy Issues Addressed by Migrant Organizations



Source: Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, Theodore, 2008, p. 608

So, while migrant civil society organizations are the key component in providing a platform for policy claims and "alternative visions of urban development" (Theodore & Martin, 2007, p. 272), planning scholars are just beginning to assess their collective impacts on community development. Due to their already extensive integration of the immigrant community (as opposed to most planning departments and other government agencies), Vitiello (2009, p.251) points out the "potential allies" that the planners have in civil society organizations for the promotion of community development.

Austin's 'Migrant Civil Society'

This final section is provided in order to briefly introduce and categorize some of the immigrant-serving organizations that exist in Austin, and collectively contrast them with those of the larger cities (Chicago and New York) described by Cordero-Guzmán. This is only an introductory analysis of Austin's immigrant-serving network, as a complete inventory is beyond the scope of this report. The intent is to provide some example of how immigrants are incorporated into an existing network in Austin in an effort to indicate a possible starting point for planners conducting Hispanic outreach efforts. I also provide a critical look at the challenges presented by Austin's unique political environment.

For the purposes of this section, I will highlight some organizations that are particularly focused on providing services to the *low-income, Spanish-speaking* population of Austin. Information was gained through Internet research, and the organizations presented are not in any way intended to be a definitive list of Austin's migrant network. Particularly absent are organizations that would fall into the first category of Cordero-Guzmán's (2005) typology, *immigrant groups, associations, and clubs*. Such groups could be Mexican hometown associations, with membership based on immigrants' region of origin and a focus on promoting regional culture and coordinating remittances for hometown projects. Any type of group whose membership is composed of immigrants falls into this category of immigrants, and there could be any number of them in Austin, even if they do not have formal incorporation, websites, etc.

Cordero-Guzmán (2005) cites *non-profit immigration organizations* and *service providers with a large metropolitan-level service base* as the remaining two categories of immigrant service organizations, and these are the types I present here. The services provided by such organizations in Austin range from ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction, to shelters for battered women, to day laborer advocacy. I've categorized Austin's immigrant service organizations as pertaining to three broad areas, shown in Figure 3.2: social services, workers' rights, and legal aid. A complete list of the organizations' websites can be found in Appendix D.

Figure 3.2 Austin 'Immigrant Social Service Organizations'

Social Services	Workers' Rights	Legal Aid
• Manos de Cristo • La Fuente Learning Center • El Buen Samaritano • Lifeworks • Caritas • Casa Marianella • Posada Esperanza • Safe Place	• Worker's Defense Project/Proyecto Defensa Laboral • Central Texas Immigrant Worker Rights Center (part of The Equal Justice Center)	• Catholic Charities of Central Texas Immigration Legal Services • Immigration Clinic University of Texas School of Law • Immigration Counseling and Outreach Services (I.C.O.S.) • American Gateways (formerly Political Asylum Project of Austin—PAPA)

The "social services" organizations provide resources such as: homeless/battered women's shelter, food assistance, educational/employment training, and health services. "Workers' rights" organizations educate immigrants workers about their rights, advocate and organize day laborers and domestic workers, and assist workers in recouping unpaid wages. "Legal aid" organizations provide case management services, represent and advocate for detained migrants or refugees, and educate immigrants about the legal system. Some organizations could be considered as pertaining to more than one category. In fact, they may form networks such as the Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition, a grassroots organization that advocates for immigrant rights and supports the programs and activities of many immigrant-affiliated groups.

The Immigrant Services Network of Austin (ISNA) is a network of immigrant advocates and service providers who convene to share information on Austin's immigrant issues. They state their purpose as "a working group of diverse community stakeholders and immigrant service providers operating together to coordinate efforts, increase public awareness and inform policy to better serve the immigrant community." ISNA's vision is to "promote the success and well being of immigrants to secure the long-term prosperity of the entire community" (http://isnaustin.org). The group meets once a month and their website invites other groups in Austin to get involved by becoming a member. The organization's member groups are listed in Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Immigrant Services Network of Austin: Member Organizations

American Gateways
(formerly the Political Asylum Project of Austin)
www.americangateways.org

Austin Community College
www.austincc.edu

Austin Immigrant Rights Coalition
www.austinirc.org

Austin Police Department, Victim Services
www.ci.austin.tx.us/police/victim.htm

Austin Public Library
www.ci.austin.tx.us/library/

Catholic Charities of Central Texas
www.ccctx.org

English at Work
www.austinenglish.org

Foundation Communities /
Community Tax Centers
www.foundcom.org
www.communitytaxcenters.org

Immigration Counseling and Outreach Services

The Law Offices of Thomas J. Esparza, Jr.
www.tomesparza.com

Literacy Coalition of Central Texas
www.willread.org

SafePlace
www.safeplace.org

Travis County Health and Human Services & Veterans Service
www.co.travis.tx.us/health_human_services/default.asp

Travis County Sheriff's Office
www.tcsheriff.org

Travis County Sheriff's Office, Victim Services
www.tcsheriff.org/victim_services.htm

Workers Defense Project /
Proyecto Defensa Laboral (PDL
www.workersdefense.org

Source: http://isnaustin.org/

It can be inferred from the groups mentioned that Austin's immigrant organizations are overwhelmingly concerned with service provision and individual outreach/case management. Many of the social service providers (Manos de Cristo, Caritas, Catholic Charities, El Buen Samaritano) are affiliated with religious organizations. Although advocating for undocumented immigrants is a value encapsulated in their work, few are focused solely on the advocacy of immigrant rights at the local level. And those that may have a major advocacy component are not likely to

recognize city or neighborhood planning measures as a priority; in fact, I was unsuccessful in receiving interviews with a few organizations I contacted, precisely because they claimed to have no involvement in city planning.

The extensive literature on migrant civil society presented at the beginning of this chapter is based on research in the two major cities of New York and Chicago. Because these cities are much larger than Austin, it is not surprising that their immigrant-serving network exceed Austin's. A study identified Chicago's metropolitan area alone as home to approximately 180 migrant-serving non-profit organizations in 2004 (Theodore & Martin, 2007). However, the urban politics of such cities have also provided context for a type of immigrant-organizing that is much more place-based and focused on specific ethnic neighborhoods or districts, identified by Theodore & Martin (2007, p. 272) as a manifestation of "transnationalism from below." The Balanced Development Coalition in Chicago, a group composed of civil society organizations, including many from the migrant network, has been a major player in the city's anti-gentrification and affordable housing activism. The Balanced Development Coalition grew out of the migrant civil society of a specific port-of-entry neighborhood, Albany Park, that (much like East Riverside) had been termed blighted by planners and city officials and facing encroaching gentrification and mass displacement of residents who were chiefly immigrants (of various nations). The coalition was formed to incorporate other neighborhood associations and ethnic groups across the city, capitalizing on "place-based collective identities" (Miller, 2000, p. 61, as quoted in Theodore & Martin, 2007). The group has seen support from Chicago alderman in pre-dominantly African-American wards as well

as traditional port-of-entry neighborhoods. Austin's lack of place-based immigrant organizations is not only a result of the city's size, but also its unique political climate. An outdated system of at-large City Council representation means that neighborhoods do not have a local representative fighting for their interests, and minority interests across the city are expected to be represented by one seat traditionally held by an African American and one seat traditionally held by a Hispanic, which guarantees a divorce between minority-issues and place-based issues. A lack a place-based advocacy from minorities and low-income residents permeates the politics of the City of Austin, likely discouraging its immigrant civil society from engaging in neighborhood issues and local campaigns such as anti-gentrification, that are pertinent to city planning.

In terms of City interaction with immigrant issues, it is worth mentioning here that Austin city government has a Commission on Immigrant Affairs, which advises the City Council on "issues of common concern to immigrants, particularly in the areas of health and human services, education, and the demographic makeup of the Austin immigrant community" (http://www.austinimmigrantaffairs.org/about.html, accessed October 5, 2009). The commission has various stated goals that relate to representing and advocating for the immigrant community, and one that relates to including immigrants in planning processes is their goal to "Promote the availability of, and promote accessibility to, local municipal educational, legal, and social resources for immigrants" (http://www.austinimmigrantaffairs.org/about.html, accessed October 5, 2009).

The Austin Commission of Immigrant Affairs is currently accepting submissions from organizations so that they can create a comprehensive citywide "Immigrant Service Providers Directory." Such a guide will be an asset to the immigrant community, as well as to planners and other groups looking to reach out to immigrants through existing networks. The Immigrant Services Network of Austin and the Austin Commission of Immigrant Affairs would both be good starting points for city planning efforts to plug into the immigrant community and reach undocumented immigrants.

We have already seen that when mobilized through their growing civil society, immigrants can create a much more visible presence than the U.S. is accustomed to seeing—in the spring of 2006, more than three million immigrants peacefully marched in cities across the country to promote immigration reform and the legalization of the undocumented already living here (Bada, X., Fox, J., & Selee, A., Eds., 2006). One organizer was quoted as saying, "You're seeing the beginning of a Latino civil rights movement in the nation" (Avila & Olivo, 2006, as quoted in Cordero-Guzmán, Martin, Quiroz-Becerra, Theodore, 2008, p. 614). The planning discipline will be served by incorporating this network as it continues gaining momentum as a means of incorporating undocumented immigrants into planning.

PART II

Chapter 4: The Austin & East Riverside Case: An Introduction

The information provided in Chapter 1 gave a glimpse into the growing population of undocumented immigrants living in the U.S. today. While unauthorized immigrants are residing in many more regions and states than traditionally, there still exist majorities in key immigrant-receiving states such as California, Texas, Florida, and New York (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Texas is additionally reported as having one of the fastest growing immigrant populations of any state in the nation (Dart, 2007). The following chart with the most recent estimates available shows Texas as holding its place as one of the main states that undocumented individuals call home, making the integration of immigrants into the planning of Texas' cities and neighborhoods an especially pertinent issue.

Figure 4.1 States with Largest Unauthorized Immigrant Populations, 2008
(population in thousands)

	Estimated Population	Range
U.S. Total	11,900	(11,400 - 12,400)
California	2,700	(2,500 - 2,850)
Texas	1,450	(1,300 - 1,550)
Florida	1,050	(950 - 1,150)
New York	925	(800 - 1,050)
New Jersey	550	(500 - 600)

Source: Pew Hispanic Center estimates based on augmented March Current Population Surveys for 2006-08.

Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2009

A 2006 Report conducted by the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts indicated the financial impact that undocumented immigrants have on the state. It concluded that the state's estimated 1.4 million undocumented (in fiscal year 2005) produced $1.58 billion of the state's $17.7 billion in revenue; notably greater than the estimated $1.16 billion in state services that they consumed (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, 2006).

Hispanics & Undocumented Immigrants in Austin

Texas has a large Hispanic population, composed of recent immigrants from geographically adjacent Latin America, as well as families that have lived in the state for generations, since the days that it formed part of the country of Mexico, and earlier. Hispanics are the largest minority group in Austin; at over 460,000 living in the greater Austin area, the Hispanic population of Austin has increased nearly 35% since the year 2000. Of significant importance to planning and the future of the city, the majority of children in Austin today are Hispanic (Hispanic Quality of Life Initiative Final Report, 2009). Although there is no documented estimation for the number of unauthorized immigrants living in Austin, it is worth noting that an estimated 94% of undocumented immigrants in the U.S. live in metropolitan areas (with 47% concentrated in the principal cities, like Austin, of those metropolitan areas) (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Based on this observation, as well as the large number of undocumented in the state of Texas, it can be inferred that the undocumented population in Austin is significant. It is also undoubtedly a diverse group composed of men, women, and children from various

countries. As noted in the introduction, 59% of the estimated 11.9 unauthorized immigrants in the U.S. today are from Mexico (Pew Hispanic Center, 2009). Based on this number, as well as trends in Hispanic growth in Austin and anecdotal evidence, it can be assumed that the majority of the undocumented population of Austin is from Mexico.

The Austin City Council passed a Resolution (No. 970925-46) in January of 1997, which declared Austin a "Safe Zone" for undocumented immigrants:

> The Austin City Council declares it to be the policy of the City of Austin that it will not discriminate or deny city services on the basis of a person's immigration status; and … declares the City of Austin to be a "Safety Zone" where all persons are treated equally, with respect and dignity, regardless of immigration status.

Local social service advocates who claimed immigrants were not using city services due to fear that they would be deported pushed for the resolution, which was sponsored by Council Member Gus Garcia. Undocumented immigrants were thought to be specifically fearful of reporting crime to the police, or using city clinics for healthcare. The resolution came during a period of growing fear among undocumented immigrants, as the nation saw increased spending on border patrol and INS (now DHS—Department of Homeland Security) operations (Dworin, 1997). The Resolution also grew out of increased communication and initiatives between Austin Police Department (APD) and the Mexican General Consulate in Austin (Garza, 1998). APD officers' are trained to protect and enforce local laws, not "do the work" of immigration officials. Current policy prohibits APD officers from stopping or detaining individuals solely to check their

immigration status, and it also prevents them from inquiring about the status of victims or witnesses (Castillo, 2008).

This resolution acknowledges the contributions that immigrants make to the culture and economy of Austin, and clarifies the city's official stance on the equal treatment of persons regardless of their legal status, resolving that, "…immigrants laboring and paying taxes should in fairness be entitled to the same ordinary benefits extended to citizens in similar circumstances." Any potential argument that the undocumented do not have a voice as residents of Austin's neighborhoods is moot in the face of this resolution.

City Planning in Austin & Opportunities for Public Engagement

Community planning efforts in Austin that effect local neighborhoods and invite public participation fall largely into the sub-departments of Comprehensive Planning and Urban Design, which are both part of the Planning and Development Review Department. Comprehensive Planning in Austin consists of individual Neighborhood Plans and the at-large City Comprehensive Plan. The Urban Design sector produces District or Corridor Master Plans that fall between the umbrella scope of the Comprehensive Plan and the individualized Neighborhood Plans, but that provide detailed design standards and ordinances that can guide development in certain sectors of the city.

Neighborhood Planning. The Comprehensive Plan of 1979, *Austin Tomorrow*, recommended the city, "Develop and implement specific, detailed plans tailored to the needs of each neighborhood," and years later (after an unsuccessful attempt to develop a new comprehensive plan), in 1996 a neighborhood planning process was adopted. Individual neighborhood plans are reviewed by the Planning Commission and then adopted by City Council as formal amendments to *Austin Tomorrow*. The Neighborhood Planning page of the City of Austin website states:

> In Austin, neighborhood planning is an opportunity for citizens to take a proactive role in the planning process and decide how their neighborhoods will move into the future. The process asks members of the community to address the local issues and concerns that affect them, their families, and their neighbors.

Neighborhood Planning is based on the ideal participation of all stakeholders, including individuals and families who live, own property, or work in the neighborhood, as well as community organizations and institutions. Its purpose is to collaboratively create a shared vision for the neighborhood as well as address specific issues such as land use, transportation, zoning, and housing stock, in order to help guide growth while preserving neighborhood character. The Neighborhood Planning page of the City of Austin website states that a neighborhood plan, "Represents the views of all the stakeholders that make up a community."

The neighborhood planning process takes place over a period of approximately one to two years, and is composed of a series of outreach activities, surveys, community

meetings and workshops, and presentations to boards, commissions & City Council. A team of city planners from the Neighborhood Planning Division is assigned to each neighborhood plan in order to facilitate workshops with stakeholders and carry out the creation and presentation of the neighborhood plan. Further details on the obstacles to including immigrants (and Hispanic in general) in the neighborhood planning process are discussed in Chapter 5.

Austin Comprehensive Plan. In September of 2008, the City appropriated funds to begin the process of creating a new Comprehensive Plan to replace the thirty year-old *Austin Tomorrow*. In the year that has passed since then, a consultant has been selected and hired, city staff have conducted initial research on other city's comprehensive plan processes (with a focus on participatory methods and outreach), a Citizen Advisory Committee has been put into place, and a Participation Plan has been generated. The Comprehensive Plan, *Imagine Austin*, is currently in its kick-off stage. It is mentioned here as an integral element of planning in Austin today, although an extensive look at the comprehensive plan process is beyond the scope of this report. It is important to keep in mind, however, as an opportunity to effectively include undocumented immigrants and other underrepresented groups in the planning process:

> The process should reach beyond those who have a history of active participation in planning to engage a broad range of constituencies within the community. This will require new tools and venues for soliciting input, as well as clear and

accessible communication and education…" (Austin Comprehensive Plan Scope Framework, Draft 7/15/09, p. 3).

The Final Participation Plan lists "Engaging Underrepresented Groups" as a key principle in the Comprehensive Plan process, stating that efforts will be taken to *bring* opportunities for participation directly to traditionally hard to reach groups (listing Spanish-speakers as one group), where they live and gather (Participation Plan, 2009, p. 7). The Participation Plan lists as specific methods to reach this goal:

> Community forums held at various times and in geographically dispersed locations, the use of social media, leveraging the relationship of community leaders and institutional partners to reach targeted populations, and periodic focus groups (Participation Plan, 2009, p. 7).

The above mentioned goals and methods are an important starting place for incorporating groups that do not normally participate in planning meetings and workshops, yet who are potentially greatly affected by plans at all different levels.

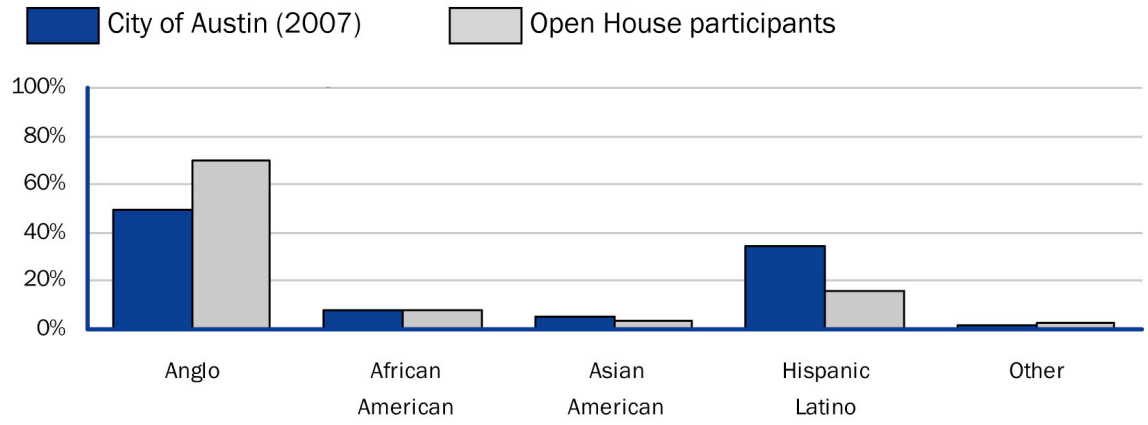
District/Corridor Master Plans. Master Plans are typically carried out on a larger scale than Neighborhood Plans, yet a smaller scope than the citywide Comprehensive Plan. The *Downtown Austin Plan* and the *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan* are examples of this type of plan that are directed by the Urban Design Division of the Planning and Development Review Department. As with the comprehensive plan, the city staff works closely with a contracted consultant to create the district or corridor master plans. There is a specified phase for public participation in which various

outreach methods attempt to gather area stakeholders for a series of meetings, workshops, surveys, and possibly further public-input mechanisms.

Trends in Citywide Public Participation. Public participation in Austin's city planning efforts follows typical trends: the majority of people who are voluntarily involved tend to be higher educated, higher income, White residents. This is reflected in the concerns of planners in the following chapter, and also echoed in the literature review on planning for underrepresented groups in Chapter 2. This section is intended simply to illustrate this point by showcasing some demographics of individuals who attended the recent fall 2009 open house kick-off event for the *Imagine Austin* Comprehensive Plan.

As indicated in Figure 4.2, Whites (Anglos) were overrepresented at this event in proportion to the city's population. Those who identified as Hispanic or Latino were the least represented.

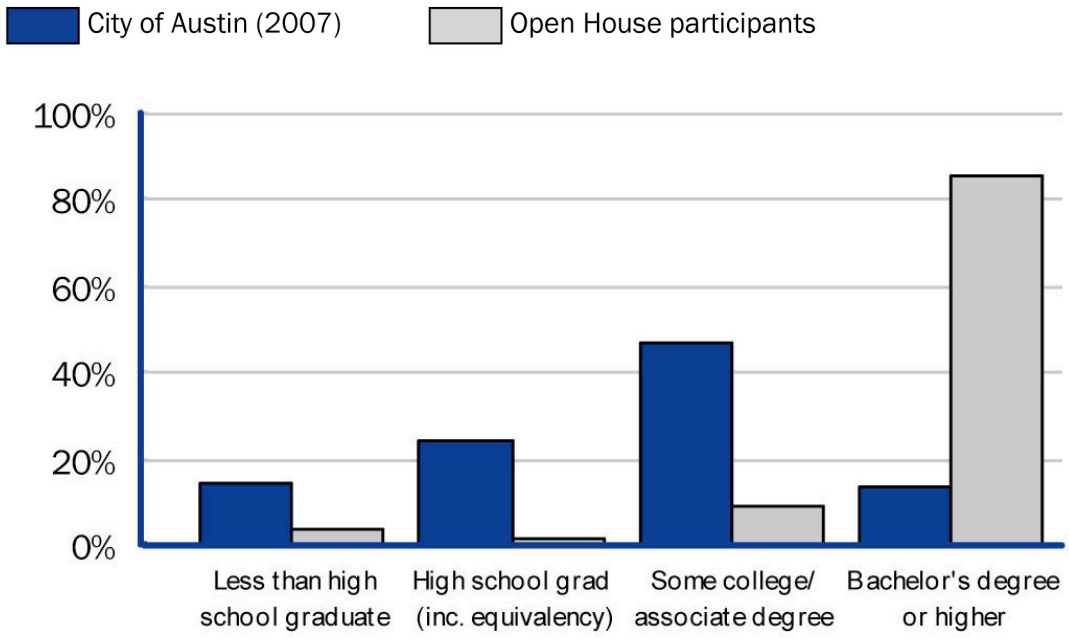
Figure 4.2 October 12 Open House Demographics: Race & Ethnicity



Source: "Who Attended the October 12, 2009, Kick-Off Open House?"
http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/compplan/downloads/cp_Oct12openhouse_results.pdf

Figure 4.3 shows the education attained by the event's participants, indicating a strong overrepresentation from individuals holding a bachelor's degree or higher, and severe underrepresentation of all other categories.

Figure 4.3 October 12 Open House Demographics: Educational Attainment



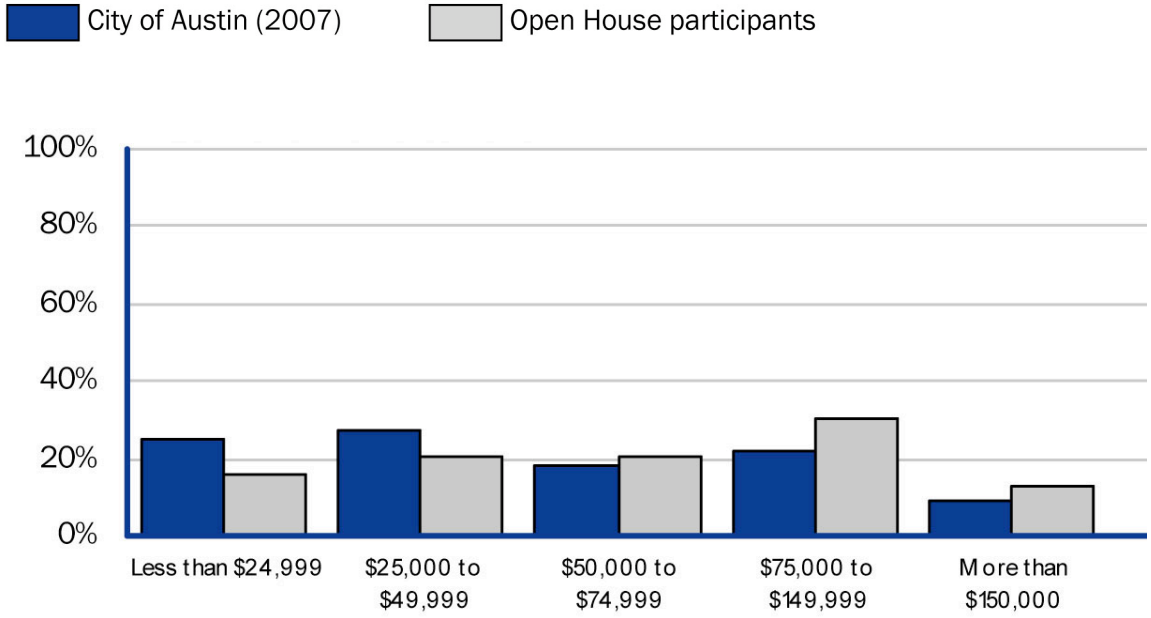
Please note: Educational attainment includes persons under the age of 18

Source: "Who Attended the October 12, 2009, Kick-Off Open House?" http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/compplan/downloads/cp_Oct12openhouse_results.pdf

Finally, Figure 4.4 shows that lower income households were underrepresented and higher income households were over represented. The Comprehensive Plan team did a similar demographic analysis at the earlier August Public Participation Workshop, and overall representation in these three categories, as well as others, improved for the October workshop. However, it is apparent that even the 'improved' demographics of

attendance still show substantial gaps in representation. It is also interesting to note that the Southeast quadrant of the city, where the East Riverside Neighborhood is located, was the least represented in both Comprehensive Plan citywide workshops.

Figure 4.4 October 12 Open House Demographics: Household Income



Source: "Who Attended the October 12, 2009, Kick-Off Open House?" http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/compplan/downloads/cp_Oct12openhouse_results.pdf

The intention of sharing these statistics is simply to capture and corroborate the notion that general opportunities for public participation in the planning process are not representative of the *actual* public. The issue is not confined to a lack of participation from undocumented immigrants, but also pertains to other subgroups.

East Riverside: The Neighborhood & the Master Plan

Before discussing the details of the plan and the physical environment of the neighborhood from a planning perspective, I'd like to revisit the importance the area holds for many of its lower-income residents. As noted in the Introduction, the East Riverside neighborhood is home to a large portion of the city's affordable housing, and is anecdotally known as a major residential hub for the immigrant workforce families. A number of retailers catering to this community include small business owners who may themselves be immigrants or Hispanic. Additionally, many social service agencies that serve the low-income immigrant population are located in or near the area, such as WIC (Women, Infants, & Children) and community health clinics. The churches and schools in and around East Riverside have also, over many years, adjusted their services to meet the needs of more Hispanic and low-income residents of the area. Two of the elementary schools that serve the East Riverside area, Metz and Brooke, are currently "recognized" according to the state accountability system; test results show that low-income and Hispanic students in these schools outperform their peers throughout the city. I have spoken to immigrant mothers who show a strong preference for Metz Elementary, where parents can express themselves in Spanish and feel comfortable being involved in their children's education (more on these mothers in Chapter 6). Important to note is that the most significant demolitions in apartment complexes that have already occurred in the zone are located in the Metz Elementary catchment area, and the principal there indicated that the changes have had the affect of decreasing the school's enrollment trends (V. Galbraith, personal communication, October 26). In search for more affordable housing,

some families unknowingly move outside of district boundaries, where they are ineligible to obtain transfers to keep their children at Metz.

While the area provides community services and resources for many inhabitants, such features are often lost to outsiders amidst observation of the area's deteriorating physical environment. The neighborhood, as described in the Introduction Chapter, is a zone defined by a wide thoroughfare surrounded by predominantly expansive commercial developments and ageing apartment complexes. In aesthetic terms, the neighborhood is unplanned and in many areas uncared for. The multi-lane East Riverside Drive is often the only route for moving around the zone, and it creates an inhospitable environment for pedestrians, of which there are many, considering lower-income residents in the area may not have full access to private vehicles. Planners tend to regard such areas as dysfunctional and in need of renewal and redevelopment (in fact, a Visual Preference Survey conducted online indicated a dislike of the corridor's appearance among members of the public). The ERCMP comments with a negative tone that, "The current appearance of the built features in the area is dominated by a cacophony of commercial signs, blistering parking lot asphalt, and a distinct lack of both quality architecture and landscaping" (City of Austin, *East Riverside Corridor Master Plan November 2009 Draft*, p. 15). In many ways, the area can be viewed as ideal for redevelopment, as the multi-lanes of East Riverside Drive provide a wide 'canvas' for multi-modal lanes of transportation (potentially including a rail line), as well as pedestrian amenities. The transformation into a livable street with nodes of transit-oriented development is not so far-fetched for both planners and the private development sector.

The ERCMP envisions the transformation of the area into a defined place with aesthetic improvements like landscaping, landmarks, and gateways that feature the main boulevard's shared space among pedestrians, bike riders, public transit, and cars. The plan provides specific recommendations for land use, urban design standards, open space, activity centers, and transportation, among other things.

It is important to note the catalysts behind the commissioning of the ERCMP. The plan's introduction states that at the same time redevelopment was beginning to occur in the East Riverside area, the Austin City Council commissioned a study to evaluate potential future rail connections throughout central Austin, as part of the Downtown Austin Plan. A rail line running along the East Riverside Corridor, from the downtown to the airport, was included in the consultant's preliminary recommendations. City Council eventually commissioned the Master Plan in response to the accelerating redevelopment already occurring in the area combined with the speculations circulating about possible future rail. A request for a corridor study from the East Riverside/Oltorf Combined neighborhood plan also influenced Council's decision. The importance here is that the political motivations behind creating the plan did not come from the low-income residents of the area; nor were they formed out of a concern surrounding the preservation and/or development of affordable housing and social services in the area. The plan was from the beginning framed in the context of guiding urban design and land use; elements concerning affordable housing, small businesses, and social services, were not added until residents (including the undocumented women interviewed in Chapter 6), pushed for their addition. This points to the reality (as indicated in Chapter 2) that planners are

operating in a political environment that can often constrain the direction a plan takes, as well as their ability as actors to capture and reconcile all the pertinent issues and perceptions any one neighborhood holds. Additionally, a plan framed in predominantly land use and design terms, is less likely to engage low-income residents who have different priorities or could perceive their opinions and input as not relative to a planning process dominated by development and design jargon.

At the time of submittal for this report, the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan was reaching its final stages of formation; it was presented to the Planning Sub-Committee various times this fall (2009), and will likely be brought to City Council before the end of the year. The planning process began in the spring of 2008, when the city hired the main consultant and began an analysis of existing conditions. The very first public stakeholder meeting for the ERCMP was held in early July 2008. 'Stakeholders' of any plan are defined as those groups and individuals who have some sort of interest in the study area. Unfortunately, public meetings do not typically provide a true representation of a neighborhood's stakeholders, and particular interests (such as land owners) can tend to dominant the general interest (such as renters). A series of public meetings for the ERCMP took place over the next year, at which the consultant team and city staff promoted community involvement and collected public input. A complete list of meetings and corresponding outreach is available in Appendix C. During this phase, a local public relations consultant was hired to specialize in the Hispanic outreach for the plan's participatory process, indicative of planning's embrace of a multicultural

population (presented in Chapter 2), even if it may only serve as Burayidi's (2003, p. 259) "veneer of civic tolerance."

Despite outreach efforts carried out by the consultant (like bilingual postcards send to all area utility users, and flyers distributed through the local schools), the ERCMP team saw very little participation from the Hispanic members of the community (even though Hispanics are estimated to comprise more than half of the study area). They did have some bilingual participants involved in the process, but only once had to use their translation services for a few Spanish-only meeting attendees (E. Leak, personal communication, September 11, 2009). There is no way to gauge whether any undocumented immigrants attended any of these initial meetings, although based on this evidence, I would infer it to be highly unlikely.

The ERCMP team surveyed the demographics of those who participated in the plan's principle questionnaire for public input; some key demographics pertaining to the content of this report are presented here, alongside estimated 2009 demographics for the zip code in which the corridor is located. While the categories do not allow for direct comparison, the percentages do indicate some strong trends. The majority of questionnaire participants earned over $50,000, while the majority of households in the zip code earned under $35,000 (with 29% earning less than $15,000). The percentages on educational attainment follow similar trends. While 75% of those involved in this aspect of the plan held a bachelors degree or higher, just under 25% of the zip code's residents are estimated to hold a bachelors degree or higher. Residents who completed

their education at less than 9th grade are estimated to compose a striking nearly 20% of the area's population, and yet only 1% of questionnaire respondents fall into this category. Finally, the percentages on race and ethnicity show an overrepresentation of whites and an underrepresentation of Hispanics.

Figure 4.5 ERCMP Participant Demographics: Household Income

Household Income of Questionnaire Participants			2009 Claritas estimated Household Income for the 78741 zip code	
Under $10,000	2%		Less than $15,000	29.00%
$10,000-$24,999	5%		$15,000-$24,999	16.52%
$25,000-$34.999	8%		$25,000-$34.999	15.60%
$35,000-$49,999	18%		$35,000-$49,999	17.46%
$50,000-$74,999	22%		$50,000-$74,999	13.03%
$75,000-$99,999	19%		$75,000-$99,999	4.61%
$100,000-$149,000	18%		$100,000-$149,000	2.84%
$150,000-$200,000	6%		$150,000-$249,000	0.63%
Above $200,000	3%		$250,000-$499,999	0.26%
			$500,000 and more	0.06%

Source: City of Austin Planning and Development Review, Handout from September 2009 Planning Subcommittee Meeting.

Figure 4.6 ERCMP Participant Demographics: Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment of Questionnaire Participants			2009 Claritas estimated education data for the 78741 zip code	
Elementary/Jr. High School	1%		Less than 9th grade	19.33%
High School	5%		Some high school, no diploma	15.49%
Associate/Technical Degree	4%		High School Graduate (or GED)	18.91%
Some College	16%		Some College, no degree	17.03%
College, Bachelors Degree	44%		Associate Degree	4.31%
Masters Degree	26%		Bachelor's Degree	16.38%
PhD	5%		Master's Degree	6.19%
			Professional School Degree	1.26%
			Doctorate Degree	1.10%

Source: City of Austin Planning and Development Review, Handout from September 2009 Planning Subcommittee Meeting.

Figure 4.7 ERCMP Participant Demographics: Ethnicity

Ethnicity of Questionnaire Participants			2009 Claritas estimated race & ethnicity data for the 78741 zip code	
Hispanic or Latino	15%		Households by **Ethnicity,** Hispanic/Latino	45.51%
White	75%		White Alone	47.87%
Black or African-American	3%		Black or African American Alone	7.21%
Asian	2%		Asian Alone	6.06%
American Indian	0%		American Indian & Alaska Native Alone	1.10%
Other	5%		Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander Alone	0.10%
			Some Other Race Alone	33.18%
			Two or More Races	4.48%
				1.10%

Source: City of Austin Planning and Development Review, Handout from September 2009 Planning Subcommittee Meeting.

When reviewing the above data, it is also important to keep in mind that public planning meetings are not reserved solely for those who live or work in the study area, but are open to any individual who considers themselves a stakeholder, even if they are simply a "concerned citizen" with no tangible investment in the neighborhood. 54% of those who participated in the questionnaire lived in or immediately adjacent to the ERCMP study area, while a fairly large 46% did not. Even less (38%) worked in or adjacent to the study area. Finally, only **8%** of the questionnaire's participants were renters, in an area we have already established as dominated with multi-family rental housing.

The Master Plan Draft that was released in August 2009 had been informed and modified by the series of public meetings and questionnaires, etc., discussed above. It contained substantial recommendations in the areas of land use, urban design guidelines, and mobility, among other categories. The topic of the need for more affordable housing citywide was mentioned in the plan (as was the fact that the area is home to a substantial

stock of the city's affordable housing). However, no significant analysis was given on how impending development could threaten this housing stock, and recommendations surrounding affordable housing were very limited and not prioritized in the overall plan. Just as significant, the 'Existing Conditions' section of the draft plan was heavily focused on the zone's physical elements (topography, infrastructure, parking, transit routes, etc.), and did not provide any look at the area's existing demographics or human and social service resources.

A small group of undocumented immigrant women living in the East Riverside area were informed of the ERCMP through a community organizer as well as their contact with the research team conducting the "Re-located Low-Income Households" study. Upon viewing the photos and renderings in the August Plan Draft, the women immediately expressed concerns that such change in their neighborhood would bring further gentrification and displacement, phenomena that they acknowledged were already affecting them and their neighbors. (These women's perceptions on the changes occurring in their neighborhood are further discussed in Chapter 6).

As the women learned more about the ERCMP and its lack of measures to protect the area's existing affordable housing and its residents, they decided to make their voices heard before the impending adoption of the plan by City Council. Four women in this group attended a September meeting of the Planning Sub-Committee at which the ERCMP was being presented. Three of them stood up and gave prepared statements on their concerns surrounding the increasing development in their area and their fears of

displacement. The women brought their own volunteer translator. One women who has lived in the area for 11 years, ('Daniela,' who is presented in Chapter 6), made a particularly poignant statement when she shared that they welcome the changes the plan encourages for a more beautiful, pedestrian-friendly area, but that they don't want them at the expense of being pushed out of a neighborhood where they have spent years building their community. After further discussion, the committee instructed the planning staff to review the plan, provide more content on affordable housing, and call a special meeting for East Riverside's Spanish-speakers, before proceeding further in its adoption phase.

The four immigrant women who attended that meeting helped plan the Spanish-speaking presentation, which was held a few weeks later at a local elementary school. The women coordinated with the school principal to send flyers about the meeting to all the parents, and they also talked to their friends and neighbors about the plan. A group of them visited the local Saturday flea market to talk to vendors about the pending plan and how it could affect their businesses, showing them news articles and collecting names and contact information. Nearly 30 people attended the meeting held at the school, where a volunteer translator facilitated communication between planning staff and community members.

In November, a revised version of the ERCMP was released. It contains more content on the analysis of existing affordable housing options and policy suggestions for preservation and development of affordable housing (as well as other elements missing

from the original draft, such as a survey of neighborhood demographics and social services). The ERCMP is currently under revision and has not been adopted at the time of submittal of this report. The background provided here is intended to give context to the data presented in Chapters 5 and 6, as well as introduce the barriers to engaging the undocumented population that are inherent in the planning process.

Chapter 5: Perspectives of Austin City Planners

Planners at the City of Austin Planning and Development Review Department demonstrated a genuine interest in engaging the undocumented immigrant community, most notably in neighborhood planning processes for areas they've identified as having a high (in some cases majority) Hispanic population. Neighborhood planners who've been directly involved in attempts to engage the Spanish-speaking population were eager to express the obstacles they faced, as well as brainstorm about how they could improve for future efforts. The viewpoints and information summarized here were gained from a meeting/group interview with one planner working on the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, and four planners working on separate Neighborhood Plans. Further information also came through email correspondence with an additional Neighborhood Planner, the Manager of Neighborhood Planning Division, and a former Neighborhood Planner who worked on the East Riverside Neighborhood Plan.

Existing outreach & participation

Planners cited email lists, mailing lists, radio, websites (both City of Austin and Planning & Development Review Department), posters, flyers, and neighborhood association announcements as avenues for notifying the general public about their meetings. In areas with a dominant Hispanic demographic, flyers and posters are

translated into Spanish. As mentioned in the previous chapter, for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, bilingual postcards were sent out to all residents (not just property owners, but all utility users in the area). Bilingual flyers were also given to area schools, to be sent home with the children.

For larger district-area plans, like the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, consultants are hired for the planning process, including a communications specialist. In this instance, the consultant also provided translation for all media (mailings, emails, press releases) as well as at the meetings. Due to limited resources, the Neighborhood Plans do not have private translation services at their disposal. There is instead one member of the staff upon whom all necessary translation falls (in addition to his regular work load).

Planners displayed a concern that despite their efforts to reach out in the Spanish language, they don't see much of a return in attendees at the meetings. Neighborhood planners have gotten creative in their attempts to reach out to community leaders such as church leaders, and still see no results:

> I think that some of the things the city is doing…are good attempts on our part, but it's not enough. I know that we have gone out to one Spanish speaking church in the neighborhood that we left flyers at. We talked to the pastor, asked him to make announcements, gave him our cards, and really, no one that we know of has shown up through there. They don't show up, even if we make attempts

like that… It's very difficult (G. Montes, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

In general, the planners have not seen much return on their efforts to reach the general Hispanic community. There are no specific attempts to reach directly the undocumented immigrant community (outreach is termed 'Hispanic' or 'Spanish-speaking' and is focused for the most part on language translation). One planner discussed recent information he had come across concerning the use of cultural 'buzz words' and the need to reach out to leaders of immigrant communities in order to build a network of trust, but specific campaigns using such tactics have yet to be expressly implemented.

The few times that a notable turnout of Spanish-dominant participants at meetings occurred were either: kick-off events that in general have larger numbers which then dwindle off, or, meetings in which attendees were galvanized around a particular issue. A neighborhood planner cited a meeting in which the issue of front-lawn parking brought out a higher number of attendees, but they did not then follow-up at any other neighborhood planning meetings. Another neighborhood planner currently working on a plan in a different neighborhood sees consistent attendance from one Spanish-speaking individual, who the planners say they know is a homeowner in the area, and not a renter. They have made an effort to make him feel safe and comfortable and asked him to encourage his friends and neighbors to come and contribute; the individual's response is

that they are fearful to share some of their ideas and particularly fearful they could see retaliation from their neighbors regarding their opinions on neighborhood issues.

Perceived reasons for lack of involvement

City planners did acknowledge legal status, and fear of deportation as possible reasons for not seeing immigrant turn-out at public planning meetings, but they did not see it as the principal reason. They also mentioned that, in general, public planning efforts tend to have more involvement from homeowners as opposed to renters, since they are assumed to be more invested in the neighborhood. Following the assumption that immigrants are renters leads to the belief that they are not as invested in what happens in the neighborhood. As stated by one planner:

> The biggest issue is just investment in an area. I mean yes, having a language barrier is I'm sure huge, but if you don't know how long you'll live someplace you may not care what will happen five years or ten years down the road (E. Leak, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

Planners expressed concern as to whether the timing of public meetings was accessible to the lifestyles of the immigrant community. The default meeting time is around 6:30 p.m., since "everyone works nine to five," as expressed by one planner. The general feeling among the planners was that they *weren't* sure if this time was convenient or even

feasible for this target population, yet it continues to be the accepted meeting time for the 'mainstream' population.

The planner on staff who receives the majority of the Spanish language phone calls to the office brought to light another type of fear—distinct from the fear of deportation. It is a fear of the official city emblem. The planner stated that recipients of mailings announcing public meetings (most often public hearings on zoning, etc.) are often confused when they see an official notice from City of Austin, thinking that it is from Austin Energy and that their electricity is going to be cut off. He receives a lot of calls from Spanish speakers asking why their electricity is going to be cut off, and he tries to take the opportunity to reach out to them:

> I have to explain to them, this is just a neighborhood meeting, you can come if you want; we just want feedback from you. But, they are just worried about their day-to-day lives, instead of trying to worry about planning (J. Browning, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

Planners also perceived that a lack of understanding as to what planning is contributes to low involvement. This problem extends beyond the immigrant community, as it affects much of the general population. However, immigrants are especially susceptible when they are coming from countries and cultures where participatory planning is minor or even non-existent. Concepts such as vision, long-range planning goals, and community input are likely foreign to them, even if they've lived in the U.S. for a long time. In addition, they may simply be accustomed to not having a

voice in local decision-making. Planners expressed that immigrants are likely to not participate because they don't really think the government will listen to and implement their ideas. Cultural differences also deter immigrants from believing they have a right to speak up about what should be done with someone else's property, as expressed by one planner:

> They don't feel like their input on someone else's property is valid. I had a call like that one time with a VMU [Vertical Mixed-Use] case notice and the Spanish speaker said, "Why should I go to this meeting to say whether this person's property should have that on it or not, if it's not my property?"…The concept of having input on someone else's piece of property and what can happen there or should happen there is foreign to them too because the don't think they should have the right to do that (G. Montes, personal communication, September 11, 2009.)

Obstacles faced by planners

The primary obstacle that planners expressed was a lack of resources. Neighborhood planners do not have contracted translators throughout the participatory planning process, and therefore are limited in the amount of material they can offer in Spanish. They see this as a possible reason for lack of involvement from the Spanish speaking community, citing that if people come to a meeting where not all of the boards or handouts are translated, they are likely to feel like they are not *really* being included

and are less likely to come back. Professional translation services can cost around $400 per meeting and neighborhood planners are not justified in hiring them for an audience of one or two individuals.

Planners also referred to the 'lost in translation' phenomena. They typically employ technical planner terms or jargon in meetings or workshops that do not translate well into Spanish, a language that does not have as much history or influence in the planning field. Private translators who are not planners are not able to explain planning concepts to immigrant participants who never participated in planning workshops in their home countries.

Issues of transparency also present an obstacle to planners who may consider holding a separate meeting with only the Spanish speaking community. One planner commented that specific attempts to work with only the Spanish speaking community are pursued:

> Then as planners you run into problems where you have this input that you collected from just one portion of the community; how do you compare that with the rest of the community? What if they disagree? Where is that dialogue between the two portions of the community? And you want it to be as transparent and inclusive as possible (M. Bhakta, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

As discussed in Chapter 2, planning has been criticized for shying away from reaching out to a particular ethnic or immigrant sub-group, as to not 'bias' the supposed

neutral results obtained from the 'public' (a concept that can take on a vague nature). This can present a great challenge to planners, who must present neutrality and "not be wedded to the needs of any particular user group" (Pestieau & Wallace, 2003, p.256). The problem here is that general public meetings that do not target one group are assumed to be representative of all users, when, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, they are most often not.

The former planner who had worked on the East Riverside Neighborhood Plan shared with me that the team had considered the idea of going to the local market to talk to people about the neighborhood plan, but they ultimately decided not to do it, because they didn't think there would be sufficient time to properly explain the planning process to people and get adequate feedback from them (S. Lopez, personal communication, Sept. 24).

Suggestions from planners

Concerning the lack of resources, the neighborhood planners concurred that for any real change to occur in their overall capacity to become more inclusive, some initiative needed to come from much 'higher up' than their level in city politics. One ideal situation would be a division where the city is providing translators, trained in pertinent language and cultural issues, to *all* departments. They pointed out that there are other departments creating Master Plans (such as Parks and Recreation), and they could make use of such services as well. Making such a suggestion, one planner commented:

> The Spanish speaking community is growing and if we don't look at this issue seriously now, or when the economy gets better, this is not the way to create Master Plans, or any type of plan without…well, you can create a Master Plan, just don't say that it's representative of every community, in the city, because it's not going to be until you translate *everything* that you send out and *everything* that you haul out at your meetings and you really make an effort to reach out to non-English speakers in general that are in the city. So, without that, I just don't see a non-English speaker, going "Oh yeah, they want me to go out to this meeting, sure I will!" (M. Bhakta, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

Finally, the neighborhood planners present at the meeting acknowledged the importance of getting to know community members personally, in a grassroots manner, in order to build trust and be successful in gaining their participation. While they acknowledged this, they also admitted that it is a lot of work, and not necessarily part of their job descriptions; it could be a full-time job in itself. Once again, the current neighborhood planners mentioned that some initiative above them would need to be put into place to hire someone to specifically build a personal relationship with the community and work to explain to them the planning process months before the planners begin to reach out to the public. Finally, one planner did propose the idea of allying with existing advocacy organizations to attempt this type of outreach:

> …Community based planning; I think we're seeing just the beginning of it now… I see think that points directly to a need for that kind of group, that would be a

> huge help for us, and for cities in general, because hopefully more generations of younger people will be bilingual, but the cost for a city to train people to be able to speak Spanish, but this isn't just about being able to speak Spanish (D. Quinnelly, personal communication, September 11, 2009).

So while the city planners showed a genuine desire to incorporate undocumented immigrants and Hispanics in general, they felt extremely limited by various factors that are often outside their control: language and cultural barriers, a lack of resources and support, and fears and misconceptions that may circulate in the immigrant community. All of the Austin planners were very aware of and expressed concerned about the representational bias present in all generic public meetings, and yet some also expressed concerns over how targeting one specific group (i.e. holding specific meetings geared toward undocumented immigrants) could be perceived from the outside as biased on their behalf. Finally, the planners showed a frustration from experiencing little return for the effort they had put into Hispanic outreach on various projects, signaling an awareness that the status-quo was not working, but also an at-loss feeling for what would work within their means. The perspectives of a small group of undocumented women in Austin, presented in the following chapter, further highlight and affirm some of these frustrations felt by the city planners.

Chapter 6: Views of Planning from the Undocumented in East Riverside

The initial concept of this report was inspired by my interaction with a group of undocumented women from East Riverside during the summer and fall of 2009. I began meeting weekly with them along with a few other local affordable housing advocates, principally to carry out research for the "Re-located Low-Income Households" study mentioned in the Introduction. Two of the group's leaders had forged their friendship while they were neighbors in a small, aging apartment complex on the northern edge of the East Riverside Corridor, near Town Lake. That building has since been demolished, and one of the women lives in a larger apartment complex just off a major intersection in the corridor. We began meeting in her apartment, and gained attendance from other friends and residents of the complex, eager to talk about their litany of problems surrounding rising rents, forced displacement, and abusive landlords and apartment management. The group truly formed out of months of dedicated grassroots networking by a community organizer affiliated with *Austin Interfaith*, a non-partisan, multi-issue coalition of religious organizations, schools, and unions that works to equip organizations to negotiate through local political processes.

As I heard early on from the women about their fears and misconceptions surrounding their own participation in the local planning process, as well as witnessed their eagerness for empowerment and representation in their neighborhood's transformation, I formed the basis for this report and created a series of questions about these issues that I integrated into the research guide for the parent study. This chapter

presents the perceptions of six undocumented individuals with whom I had one-on-one conversations about planning and their East Riverside neighborhood.[3]

General Background & Civic Participation

All of the women have children at school age and/or younger, and do not participate in the workforce on a consistent basis. They all have husbands who work in construction and are undocumented as well (except for Cristy, whose husband is a US resident). The following vignettes are provided to give a brief introduction into their general backgrounds and history of civic or political participation.

Daniela has been living in Austin for eleven years, and resides in an apartment complex in the East Riverside area. Daniela is originally from Monterrey, Nuevo Leon, where she worked as a church secretary. She attended school until she completed two semesters of high school. She did not have positive experiences with political participation in Mexico, citing an instance where she began involvement in a campaign for the PRI (a major Mexican political party, *Partido Revolucionario Institucional*), but didn't like what she saw and quickly pulled out. Her family did not participate in

[3] The six individuals with whom I conducted semi-structured interviews to gather information for this chapter are all Mexican women in their late twenties/early thirties who are living in Austin without legal documentation. The interviews were held in the homes of the women, from September 9 to September 17, 2009. All of the women were given an explanation of the purpose of this report, and each gave her informed consent to participate in a recorded conversation with me. The names used here have all been changed in order to protect the identity of each woman and her family. The fact that all participants are women is simply a result of my established rapport with a women's group and their availability and interest in the project. I do not attempt to take on an extensive analysis of gender in planning, although there is certainly material present to continue further research in that direction.

political activities. Despite her 11 years in Austin, she does not consider herself to be very involved in any groups, other than social groups of friends, and a newly formed group of women who meet surrounding the changes occurring in the East Riverside area (this is the group mentioned in Chapter 4; it does not have an official name, but for the purposes of this report will from here on be described as the "East Riverside women's group"). She was involved at her children's former school, where there is a strong presence of immigrant parents, but due to affordability issues, her family was forced to move to a different apartment complex nearby and her children are now entering a new school where she does not feel included or involved.

Elena also lives in an East Riverside apartment with her five children. After the interview, but during the writing of this report, her husband, a construction worker/day laborer, was unexpectedly deported and is now back in Mexico. Elena does very limited seamstress work out of her home, but does not have any steady income to support her five children, the youngest of whom are U.S. citizens. She has a roughly 7th grade equivalent education and worked as a seamstress and cake-baker in Zacatecas before migrating to the US where her husband had already been working for a few years. Elena has been living in Austin and the East Riverside neighborhood for five years. Elena did participate in local politics in Zacatecas, and remembers that her parents used to hold campaign meetings in front of their house. Elena admitted to not be overly involved in civic activities in Austin, but said that she likes to be involved when she can, especially in regard to activities for her children's school. She is also a member of the East Riverside women's group.

Georgina has only been in the US and Austin for two years, and she has a baby who was born here and lives with her husband and father-in-law. Georgina has two older children who still live in Torreon, Mexico with family. When she lived in Mexico, she completed her education until middle school and did not work; she never participated in any local political activity. In Austin, she has no group that she associates herself with, other than the East Riverside women's group, of which she is a regular member. Georgina does not drive or know the bus system in Austin and mostly stays in her apartment during the day while her husband and father-in-law pursue labor opportunities.

Melissa is 27 years old and lives with her husband and two (soon to be three) children in a duplex in a South Austin neighborhood; she's been in Austin for 8 years. They used to live in the East Riverside area but their low-rent apartment was vacated to be demolished. Melissa and her family still frequent the East Riverside area, since their church, friends, and other resources are all located there; they hope to move back to the area if they can afford to. Melissa is from Salamanca, Guanajuato, where she worked in a packaging plant after leaving school with a ninth-grade equivalent level of education. She remembers that her parents were involved in local politics in Mexico, but she was not. Melissa is very involved in a church group that meets regularly, and she also makes it to the East Riverside women's group meetings when transportation allows her.

Cristy has lived in Austin for 2 years, although before moving there she lived in Las Vegas and then Los Angeles. Her husband is a U.S. resident and has a more stable construction job than some of the others mentioned above. Cristy has a higher level of

education than the other women, having completed high school in Guadalajara, Jalisco, where she then owned a small business selling fruits and cereals. She participated in some activities in Mexico, mostly student-related functions when she was in high school. She remembers that her parents were civically involved in local issues that affected the neighborhood, such as infrastructure improvements, but they were not involved on a wider political scale. In Austin, she has just started going to meetings at her children's school. Although Cristy attended some initial meetings of the East Riverside women's group, she has not stayed involved and has not been to any public meetings concerning the planning in her neighborhood.

Laura lives in an apartment with her husband and two children in the Montopolis area, which is also part of the East Riverside Corridor. She's been in Austin for 10 years and has moved around to different areas of the city quite frequently. She was 17 when she migrated to the U.S. to look for work; she later met her husband, also an undocumented immigrant, and is now a housewife while he works in construction. Laura is from San Luis Potosi, where she was not involved in local politics. Here in Austin she doesn't consider herself part of any group other than her church community.

Feelings of Exclusion and Discrimination

When asked if during the time they've lived here, they've felt included in the citywide politics of Austin, the six women all responded no. Daniela commented that, "I feel like we undocumented people are still not really taken into consideration" ('Daniela,'

personal communication, September 9, 2009). The women who are involved in the East Riverside women's group are increasingly feeling like they are included in the politics and development of their neighborhood, since they have begun organizing and attending meetings about the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan. Elena commented after attending the Planning Sub-Committee at City Hall, and sharing her story with committee members, she now feels included. Melissa, who has moved away from the East Riverside area due to rising rents, has felt somewhat included in her new neighborhood, where her husband and she have attended a couple of neighborhood watch group meetings to meet others and learn about basic neighborhood crime issues.

I also asked the women how people who knew of their undocumented status tended to treat them, in order to gauge whether experiences of past discrimination could potentially inhibit their involvement in planning. Although they commented that discrimination and racism is definitely present in Austin, most did not feel like they had personally been affected in any grave manner. Most simply answered that there are good people who treat them very well, and others who treat them poorly (the latter occurring less often). Much of the interaction these women have with people outside their social circle occurs in the service sector; at clinics, the hospital, the stores, or social service offices. In general, they feel like such individuals are helpful and don't seem to question or care whether they have documentation or not. Melissa commented, "people who are from here, 100% from here, treat us better than our own people [i.e. Hispanics who live here legally]" ('Melissa,' personal communication, September 16, 2009). Cristy confirmed that usually in a public office if someone doesn't speak Spanish they are very

friendly to her and go and find someone who can help her, without denying her any service. Indeed, half of the women commented that those who are most rude and discriminatory toward them are the Spanish-speaking individuals who work for apartment management entities in places they have lived or currently live. The women have many stories of how they and their friends and neighbors have been financially taken advantage of by property managers. Laura even shared a story in which she and her husband were victims of a scam in which a home broker solicited thousands of dollars from them over a period of a year, with the promise of a home he never signed over to them.

These stories of discriminatory behavior are mentioned here only to document the perceptions of these women concerning how people in the general public may treat them. I am in no way trying to make any conclusions about how one racial or ethnic group treats them in comparison to another. It is likely that their perceptions of other Hispanics treating them poorly are a result of their frequent interaction with Hispanics and the fact that they clearly understand what other Spanish-speakers are saying to them, whether it be pleasant or not. Since they cannot fully communicate in English, they may not as strongly perceive discriminatory behavior carried out against them on behalf of Anglos. It is also possible that since I am Anglo and a U.S. citizen (a learned-Spanish speaker), the interviewees were not comfortable expressing to me that they generally felt discrimination from people like me. Nonetheless, it is important to conclude that while in general these women do not feel pressing discrimination based on their legal status, they have encountered instances where it has occurred. I, however, do not see their

perceptions of discrimination as a major obstacle to incorporating them in planning or other political or civic activities.

Changes in Neighborhood & Perceptions of Public Meetings

All of the women interviewed were aware of increasing trends in their neighborhood: rising rents and some apartment complexes being slated for demolition, forcing tenants to leave. They have all had to move around to various apartments due to rising rent, unfair management issues, or demolitions. In general, they are worried about the possible changes in the area, but remark that as of yet, there has not been any major displacement or alteration in the character of the neighborhood. The women also noted increasing problems of crime, drugs, and prostitution in the East Riverside, which they linked at times directly to mismanaged abandoned buildings that renters have been forced to leave but that still have not been demolished or redeveloped.

Elena, Georgina, Melissa, and Daniela possess more knowledge about the East Riverside Master Corridor Plan, due to their women's group meetings and their visits to a couple public meetings with the city planning staff. These four women all noted that the Master Plan, which they refer to as the *proyecto*, would bring many benefits to the area. Benefits that they saw to be particularly relevant to their lives were the potential decrease in criminal activity and the increased transportation options and pedestrian safety measures. But in the same breath, they acknowledged that they were worried because such changes most likely meant they could no longer afford to live in the neighborhood:

> Well, it's already starting to happen… and to me, it's going to all be really pretty, but it's also worrisome, because we don't know what is going to happen to us, where we are going to go… everything is going to be more expensive and different ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

When asked if they would like to have a voice in the changes and development occurring in their neighborhood, the women all answered that they would, and furthermore, that undocumented immigrants *should* have a voice. Georgina pointed out that the majority of people living in the apartment complexes like hers were immigrants, and even though they aren't from this country, many have much more time living in the neighborhood than she does. Daniela stated her case for why immigrants should be involved by mentioning their contributions to the local economy, even sharing that her husband and his co-workers can point out buildings in Austin that they have helped build:

> I think that we should have a voice because we are people who, in one way or another, are part of this country's economy and we've participated, just like them, we also pay our taxes, and that's why I think that we have a little bit of a right to be informed and be part of everything that's happening in the neighborhood here ('Daniela,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

Melissa stated that they should have a voice in planning for the area because the decisions made affect them personally (as stated earlier, Melissa was forced out of her low-rent apartment due to pending demolition). Elena also mentioned that even though

they aren't citizens of the country, many of their children are, which should give them the right to speak up and participate in planning processes.

Even though the women all thought they *should* be taken into consideration for plans and development in their neighborhood, none of them had a clear understanding or recollection of the city's outreach efforts during the public participation phase of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan, and none of them attended a single meeting or workshop during this phase. Not one of the six women recalled receiving any Spanish-language flyer, postcard, or other written announcement about the public workshops. Most stated that perhaps they received something in English and then threw it away. Daniela and Cristy both claimed to have seen publicity about the plan through the television during news broadcasts. Ultimately, five of the six the women heard about the plan long after the public participation phase, through the efforts of the community organizer who is involved in the East Riverside women's group. One woman, Laura, learned about the plan for the first time during the interview for this report. Even though Daniela and Cristy were vaguely aware of the planning process much earlier, neither of them ever considered attending any public meetings, "Because we didn't know that we [i.e. undocumented persons] could be included in this project, that we could participate, we simply didn't know" (Daniela, personal communication, September 9, 2009). Cristy explained that, "you think, 'Should I go? If I go, will something happen to me?' It's just a fear…so I've never attended" (Cristy, personal communication, September 18, 2009).

Fear of Deportation

The fear of deportation is a very real and constant reality for undocumented immigrants living in the U.S., even those who have been here for a long time. A 2007 poll shows that fear of deportation has actually increased in recent years due to the political climate and public debate surrounding immigration (Pew Hispanic Center, 2007). Fear, therefore, is a major deterrent in attending public meetings or being involved in any level of public planning or political processes. All six of the women I interviewed mentioned fear of deportation repeatedly, and unequivocally referred to it as the principle reason as to why undocumented immigrants are not involved in community planning or politics (it seemed to be their answer to almost every question I asked). Concerning this fear of attending public events like forums or workshops, Halloran's (2004) research in Austin concluded "undocumented immigrants approach events and people very differently that the majority of U.S. citizens." Laura speaks very pointedly to this:

> Sometimes you're just scared, because if you don't have your papers you're going to think that maybe they'll be people there just to be checking to see if you have your papers or not. That's why it's better to just stay isolated, separate. Because lots of times, people will find out their apartment is being torn down, but prefer to just leave without saying anything instead of getting involved in these things. And like, how right now the laws are changing even more, people are even more scared ('Laura,' personal communication, September 18, 2009).

Cristy simply expresses the risk of deportation as outweighing the potential benefits of being involved in any public political activity. She says she doesn't get involved, because you never know what could happen, and "I don't want my children to have to suffer in Mexico…here you get home, you open the fridge, and you have food for them, and there [in Mexico], there's not even any food to give to your kids" ('Cristy,' personal communication, September 18, 2009).

This fear extends beyond simple attendance at public meetings. Almost all of the women commented to me (without me specifically asking them) that for an initial period of time after they arrived in the U.S. they limited themselves in leaving their homes for fear that at any time they could be captured and deported. Cristy said, in response to her involvement in any social or civic group, "I became so anti-social when I got here, because I was just scared…I was scared to even talk. It's not the same to carry papers, permission to be here, as it is to carry nothing…it's an ugly fear to live with" ('Cristy,' personal communication, September 18, 2009). Cristy hardly left the property where her apartment complex was in Las Vegas when she first came to the U.S., except when she was with her husband on the weekends. Elena told me how she was so scared to just walk around outside, thinking every police car she saw would come and get her:

> You know, I used to think that I had to live my life as if I were always hiding…I didn't want my name on anything, because I was scared, but now, whatever. I think that there are a lot of people who think like that ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

Such dramatic fear dissipated slowly over time for Cristy and Elena and the other women. The general trend is that this fear of going about one's daily activities outside the home decreased over a period of a couple years. Elena shared that it takes time and also talking to other undocumented immigrants who have been here longer to become more comfortable with being in public. It is also worth noting that Georgina, who at 2 years was the women with the least amount of time living in the U.S., told me that most days she doesn't leave her apartment at all.

Elena explained that her children's growth and integration into life in Austin was the turning point for her getting over many of her fears, telling me that, "with kids you can't hide anymore, you have to give your name at the schools and hospitals" ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009). Since she has three children who are U.S. citizens, she told me that they were offered WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) services, even though she did not request them. The first time she went to the WIC office she was so scared of what was going to happen, but she had no choice because she needed to feed her children; the same occurred when she enrolled her children for Medicaid, but she learned over time that it was okay for her to take advantages of these services for her children. In her research on the politics of migrants, Sassen (2004) recognizes this phenomenon as an integral facet in the emergence of undocumented women as potential political actors for their communities:

> …it is precisely in their role as housewives that they are responsible for taking care of their children, which includes dealing with public state agencies: schools,

> health system, police, civic obligations…They are the ones that are likely to have to handle the legal vulnerability of their families in the process of seeking public and social services for their families. All of this amounts to participation in the public sphere and their possible emergence as public actors (p. 63).

This phenomenon of housewives as potential leading actors will be addressed again in the final section of this chapter.

Increasing Sense of Empowerment

The four women who participate regularly in the East Riverside group all demonstrated a diminished fear of participating in public meetings and planning initiatives. Once they learned that they had a right to attend meetings and that no repercussions would occur, their fears greatly diminished. (They were told this first by a grassroots community organizer who had gained their trust, and then later by a university professor whom they regarded as a trusted authority). Melissa shared:

> Yes, we were scared before, because we're here illegally. That was the fear we had. And now, well, that changed, because we found out that no, they don't check papers, they don't ask you for anything [i.e. identification] in these meetings, but we didn't know before ('Melissa,' personal communication, September 16, 2009).

The realization and confirmation that they could attend public meetings and be involved in planning processes had an empowering effect on the women who lived for so long with fear to speak up about issues in their neighborhood:

> Yes, I was scared before…but now that you all have explained to us clearly that this doesn't happen, that our [legal] status does not get reported, I feel much more calm, relaxed, that now I can say, I'm here, present, truly" ('Daniela,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

Besides being told by someone they trusted that they need have no fear of retribution by attending meetings, actually attending an official public meeting and seeing this for themselves had a major impact in further diminishing these four women's fears. Elena shared that before the first meeting they attended and spoke at (a planning sub-committee meeting at City Hall), she was nervous, wondering what others were going to say to her, worried they'd wonder, " 'She has no reason to be here, if she's not a citizen; what's she doing here?' " ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009). After committee members and other members of the public received her and her words with respect at the public meeting, Elena says she's losing all her fear to attend meetings and speak up.

Daniela explained that she felt very good after speaking at the sub-committee meeting because:

> These important people (for us important, because they're superior to us in their education and everything, you know), well, they were paying attention to us. One

> man even referred to me later and mentioned me by name! In that moment I felt very good, because I knew that they had begun to take us into consideration, even if by a little…it was so much better than I expected ('Daniela,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

The sense of empowerment by having their presence and input acknowledged galvanized these women to continue their participation. In the same manner, I would predict that for levels of participation to remain consistent, seeing actual results and implementation from their input is key. This is generally true for public participants, not just underrepresented groups (Participation Plan, 2009).

Further Obstacles to Involvement

The concept of fear was such an overpowering obstacle for public participation, that it was almost as if the women had not given much thought to what other obstacles could be present if one were to move beyond the fear of deportation and consider being involved in public participation efforts. The four women who had for the most part overcome this fear explained that lack of involvement from others was because of fear, not because of lack of interest: "There are people who are very interested, more than anything it's the fear, but they are interested" ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009). Elena, Daniela, Georgina, and Melissa have tried to galvanize community interest around the plan by talking to neighborhood vendors, and other mothers at the school, encouraging them to inform themselves and attend upcoming

meetings. They all recognize that it is going to take awhile for people to begin getting over these fears. The women also mentioned that many undocumented assume that their input is not valid and would not be taken into consideration: "they think that their voice and their vote doesn't count." ('Georgina,' personal communication, September 9, 2009).

The women also cited lack of available information and communication about city planning efforts as a major reason that undocumented people are not involved. As described in Chapters 4 & 5, extensive efforts to reach this population through Spanish-language flyers and other media have been implemented by the city in East Riverside and other neighborhoods. So the issue here is lack of the *successful* communication of planning processes and opportunities for public involvement. Elena spoke to an overall ignorance as to what opportunities, etc., are available to her in Austin. She says that she used to volunteer in Mexico, and she doesn't do that here because she doesn't even know what opportunities are available to her.

When I asked the women what the major logistical obstacles were to undocumented individuals' attendance at public meetings they cited work and household schedules as wells as transportation as key. Most of the men are dependent on inconsistent 'day labor'-type schedules where, if they are not out working they are out looking for work. The women's schedules are largely dependent on their husband's and children's goings-about. They prepare food for their husbands in the morning and the evening, and by their cultural norms, are usually expected to (and/or want to) be home with their husbands in the evening to eat with them. Many have children of varying ages,

which means they are negotiating schedules for various schools. Elena explained that she is so dependent on her children's schedules, because she has to escort them to and from school every morning and afternoon. In Mexico, her children's schools were much closer to the home, and they walked to and from school on their own because she felt it was safe and everyone knew one another. Three of the six women named transportation as the biggest logistical obstacle for people to attend meetings. Many families only have one vehicle, which the husband uses to travel to work, and others have no vehicles.

Suggestions for Better Incorporation

When I asked the women who from the undocumented immigrant community would be most appropriate to target and most likely to come to meetings, the overwhelming response was the housewives, like themselves. The men arrive home from work tired, and are not likely to want to then attend meetings. Since the women are in the home all day, they are a bit more available to dedicate themselves to participating, especially if meetings can be held during the specific hours that all their children are in school. They told me that in Mexico, a lot of women are involved in local politics, so the idea isn't very new to them. They tell their husbands about what they are doing, and as observed by Sassen (2004) in her research:

> They are often the ones in the household who mediate in this process…precisely in their role as housewives, a non-political subject, they emerge as a type of informal political/civic subject. These are dimensions of

> citizenship and citizenship practices, which do not fit the indicators, and categories of mainstream frameworks for understanding citizenship and political life (p. 63)

The women all had ideas on how the city could publicize public meetings and planning workshops. Four of the women stated that the television was likely the best medium to reach people, especially through the Spanish-language channels at the news hour. Most importantly, they stated that the announcements should specify that an individual's legal status does not affect his or her attendance or ability to contribute, and that people should not be afraid to come and speak up. Cristy also mentioned that posters displayed in the commercial spaces their community uses often, such as Wal-Mart, H.E.B., and McDonald's, could be effective as well. The women also thought that getting the word out through the schools and churches could be effective because they are institutions that people like themselves already trust. Daniela and Elena both commented that people like the principles or teachers at their children's schools would be good people to advertise through, "because there you feel okay, because it's coming from the school, where they're educating your children, and you know they're not giving you anything bad" ('Daniela,' personal communication, September 9, 2009). Since this group of women has been informed in part by Dr. Elizabeth Mueller, and myself, two of them also thought that students and professors could tell them about the planning meetings. The four women who've been meeting regularly noted the importance of face-to-face communication about planning efforts and community meetings. Melissa stated:

> If you just give someone a flyer, many times they aren't going to read it. More than anything, to plan the meetings, you have to go personally to invite people, neighbor-to-neighbor, and that gets more people, because you've explained it to them personally ('Melissa,' personal communication, September 16, 2009).

The women also named the schools and the churches as the space they would feel most comfortable speaking up and participating in a meeting or workshop. Those whose children attended the Metz Elementary School in East Riverside felt it would be the best place for a meeting because the principal and most teachers speak Spanish and they feel very comfortable and supported there. A couple of women whose children go to different schools, where not many people speak English, were not as comfortable with the school as a meeting place, but still thought it better than a city-affiliated building like City Hall. Melissa commented that church was the place she'd be most comfortable, because she feels protected there, but she knows that's not the same for everyone; she did say that it depends a lot on the language factor. Laura also favored participating in meetings held at her church, sharing, "In church, there's just more trust there. The majority of us are Hispanic and we all know each other so we'd feel more comfortable to talk" ('Laura,' personal communication, September 18, 2009). Laura thought that meetings should be segregated so that she could attend a meeting with only others who "looked like her" and then she would be more at ease. Elena told me that the time she attended a sub-committee meeting at City Hall she was nervous but not *too* nervous because the meeting was in a fairly small room and there weren't that many people present. Elena shared that if the meeting had been larger, or held in Council Chambers, she would have been much

more scared to participate, "because we feel like all those people are educated and we're not, so it could be scary" ('Elena,' personal communication, September 9, 2009). Cristy said she'd be most comfortable expressing her ideas in a small meeting with neighbors and friends in someone's house or apartment.

Finally, all the women indicated that translation provided by the city or another third party would be essential for their attendance and participation in planning meetings. Childcare would also be a helpful service, especially if meetings are in the evening, because many have small children. It's also important for the meeting to be held in the neighborhood, close to residences, since transportation is an issue for many people. Cristy also proposed the idea of a shuttle bus that could pass by the low-income apartment complexes to pick people up and take them all to the meeting. Georgina also indicated that it would be ideal to have a community center-type meeting place close to their apartments that they could use for meetings. She and her neighbors in the East Riverside women's group have attempted to get access to the meeting room in the apartment complex, and it has been denied them, so they feel like they have no community space they can use.

Chapter 7: Conclusions and Recommendations

Throughout this report, I have emphasized the vulnerability of undocumented immigrants due to the combination of poverty-related struggles they face and the fear of deportation that permeates their daily lives, preventing them from seeking basic help or even retribution in the face of injustices. Immigrants are an integral part of U.S. society, and their presence creates and accentuates some of the major urban issues faced by planners today. The need for planners to better incorporate the undocumented (as well as other traditionally under-represented groups) is pressing, and in order to properly address urban problems and create more sustainable and just neighborhoods and cities, the planning discipline needs to 're-conceptualize.' This final chapter will draw some new conclusions that come to light from the literature and the Austin/East Riverside case study, and will also provide some conceptual as well as practical suggestions for planners to incorporate the undocumented in public planning processes. Finally, I will conclude by indicating ideas for possible future research.

An extensive critique of planning, summarized in Chapter 2, has shown it to be a discipline rooted in supposed neutrality, while in fact representing bias and even (re)producing unjust social hierarchies. This does not mean that planners are purposely acting unjustly, but rather that the tools and conceptual framework of the profession already carry with them a rational discourse that fails to incorporate certain 'invisible' groups like undocumented immigrants.

Proactively 'Re-imagining' Outreach Methods

For my case study, I chose to focus on the active participation (and lack thereof) of undocumented immigrants in public planning meetings, particularly those of the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan in Austin. The demographics of groups who participated in ERCMP workshops, as well as other demographics presented for individuals who participated voluntarily in a citywide Austin planning meeting, demonstrate that participatory planning techniques are not automatically representative of a certain population. This is not a new phenomenon, but rather something planners have been dealing with for quite awhile, and many, such as those Austin city planners interviewed for Chapter 5, are eager to discover and employ solutions for more representative inclusion.

So, voluntary public planning meetings draw an unbalanced sample of community members, and because of this as well as other reasons, planners fail to adequately provide for traditionally under-represented constituencies, as indicated by Harwood's (2005) research, presented in Chapter 2. Therefore, planners must reject a "business as usual" model and instead begin to proactively seek out the opinions of the underrepresented, as well as educate themselves on the particular needs of the vulnerable. The Austin Comprehensive Plan, in its very early stages, has begun to do this by holding some incentivized focus groups for which they proactively selected minorities and individuals from traditionally under-represented groups to participate. This is an example of what

kind of creative outreach can be performed when there is budgetary allocation, which is not always the case.

Borrowing from Bollen's (2002) conclusion that the planning discipline needs to "retool and re-conceptualize," I will conclude this report by providing recommendations that range from direct, practical suggestions to broad, conceptual insights. These concluding recommendations, therefore, are directed toward the planning profession and academia at large, as well as at planners working in U.S. cities and neighborhoods with undocumented populations.

'Retooling'—Practical Recommendations for U.S. City Planning

Due to cultural, social and legal complexities, impersonal outreach and advertising for public participation opportunities simply does not work for the undocumented community. Halloran found evidence to support this from her conversations with Austin immigrant service providers and organizers in 2004. The concept is overwhelmingly supported by this report: planners have sent out *thousands* of Spanish language flyers and postcards in pre-dominantly Hispanic neighborhoods like East Riverside and seen little to no return. The undocumented immigrant women that I spoke to indicated that the never saw any such flyers, probably meaning that if and when they did, they were not impacted by them. I contend that this immediate disregard of impersonal outreach such as flyers stems from a consistent fear the undocumented have of official U.S. institutions, as well as a deep-seated mentality that they will not be

permitted the right to participate due to their legal status. While the conceptual problem seems rather grand here, I'd recommend a fairly simple action that could be taken to instigate a change: City planning efforts should take all the resources they are spending to impersonally tell the immigrant community about up-coming events they can participate in, and instead, use them to *personally start telling them that they are allowed to participate in events*.

City and neighborhood planners need to gain the trust of undocumented immigrants if they ever expect them to participate. In a City like Austin, where a "Safety Zone" Resolution has been in place for over ten years, the undocumented population is still shockingly *afraid* of the city and unaware of their rights. One approach the planning department or any other city department could take to begin to remedy this is a strategy previously employed by the Austin Police Department (APD), and discussed in Halloran's (2004) report. Inspired by the concern that undocumented immigrants' fear of APD would impede them from reporting crime and seeking assistance, APD obtained grant funds in 2000 to add an Immigrant Outreach component to their Office of the Community Liaison, and a position was maintained for three years until proper funding was no longer available. Manuel Renteria, one of the informants in Halloran's research, held this position, and he reported that personal, one-on-one interaction was the best way to gain the trust of an undocumented individual: "Nothing works better than a handshake" (M. Renteria, as quoted in Halloran, 2004). A planning-affiliated city employee whose sole job is to build relationships with and inform the undocumented

immigrant population could have great potential (provided the individual is qualified in pertinent cultural as well as planning knowledge).

Another opportunity for planners is to partner with existing organizations that have already built trust with the undocumented population—the immigrant civil society. For immigrants, being connected with city planning through figures they trust, such as service providers and educators, provides legitimacy and security. The network available in Austin that is outlined in Chapter 3 is one place for planners to start. However, as discussed in Chapter 3, the limited or even nonexistent connection that the immigrant service network has with neighborhoods and place-based identities presents a challenge. Therefore, a further recommendation would be an extension of the migrant civil community. Austin has numerous neighborhood associations but homeowners and English speakers overwhelmingly dominate them. Immigrants civic groups started at the local level and allowing residents to discuss the happenings in their neighborhood in Spanish could act as an additional resource for the City, and be a first step to a city-wide coalition of immigrant residents.

In addition, as mentioned by the undocumented women I interviewed, school principals and church leaders are also another positive vehicle of communication. It is important to note here that I do not suggest flyers or posters distributed at schools and churches, but rather the verbal endorsement of leaders at these trusted institutions. This is simply a recommendation to employ basic grassroots tactics. Some planners have tried this, especially neighborhood planners whose limited budgets actually encourage a more

grassroots approach. As mentioned in Chapter 5, some neighborhood planners visited a predominately Hispanic church to speak to the pastor about publicizing their meetings. They felt discouraged when they saw no return from their visit. To be effective, grassroots methods take persistence, and most importantly, time, something that full-time planners most realistically do not have to give. This task of persistent grassroots connection with the existing immigrant network would ideally belong to the full-time community liaison described above. As suggested by the planners I spoke with, a higher up citywide initiative could provide such an opportunity; community liaisons could be assigned to specific areas of the city and could be shared among different organizations like APD and Planning and Development Review.

There are always the practical considerations of why some groups are traditionally under-represented. Some low-income individuals do not have access to the internet for email distribution lists and online public participation surveys, and day laborers may not have time dedicated for attending public meetings. Sub-groups like undocumented immigrants may not be available or open to contributing their input through such forums. A pointed liaison could easily garner input for the planning process; that is, residents do not only learn from the liaison, but the liaison (and therefore planners) also learns from the residents. Input could be gained through more qualitative or even ethnographic methods, such as the semi-structured interviews used for this report. Home visits and small (Spanish-only) focus groups held in trusted spaces, such as elementary schools, can serve as expansions of planners' definitions of "public participation." This more qualitative, grassroots approach is called for in the literature on

inclusive planning, as documented by Miraftab & McConnell, and presented in Chapter 2. It also reflects Thompson's culturally inclusive planner who is sensitive to cultural differences and open to new and innovative approaches outside planning's traditionally quantitative toolbox.

'Re-conceptualizing'—Contributions to Planning Theory

Openness to more qualitative avenues for garnering public input is a conceptual shift that pertains to the planning discipline at large. Another suggested shift relates to the expansion of planners' as well as society's notions of "citizenship." The German approach (presented in Chapter 2) of distinct concepts for "local citizen" and "national citizen" is particularly inspiring here. The planning discipline's use of the word 'stakeholder' is a good step in the right direction, but I would make the bold suggestion that in our increasing transnational and global world, the word 'citizen' should be struck from our planning vocabulary, as it has the potential to exclude certain groups (i.e. the undocumented, the indigenous, even legal residents). In addition, other long-maintained notions of 'who participates' need to be re-visited in light of the evolving, multi-cultural U.S. city and neighborhood. The emergence of undocumented housewives as potential political actors, as confirmed by Sassen's (2004) research and my own conversations with undocumented women, challenges the mainstream framework available on citizenship practices.

Another important long-held notion in planning is that homeowners always tend to participate in public planning processes more than renters. There exists a strong misconception in the U.S. that all individuals and households are on the same evolutionary trajectory that starts at renting and ends at homeownership. The assumption follows that until someone is a homeowner, they're just not as invested in their neighborhood and therefore won't be interested in contributing to long-term planning efforts. The planners I spoke with mentioned this renter vs. homeowner notion as a potential reason for lack of involvement from undocumented immigrants. However, it is important to note that owning a home is simply an unattainable notion for many undocumented immigrants, and is therefore not a measure of their personal investment in, contribution to, or desire to stay in and plan for, a particular neighborhood. As long as this misconception is allowed as an excuse for why 'certain people' (like undocumented immigrants, Hispanics, or any other subgroup that may be predominantly renters in a certain neighborhood) are not involved, those who *are* homeowners are being perpetually privileged, in a passive if not direct manner. The women whose ideas are presented in Chapter 6 are all renters, and have had high mobility among apartment complexes, due to the instability brought on by their legal and income status; however, they have managed to stay in the same neighborhood, some for as many as 8 or 11 years. To allow immediate assumption that they are not invested in their neighborhood simply because they are renters does not do them justice. Real estate basics claim that the average family in the U.S. moves from a home they own every 5-7 years (because they are moving to another city, upgrading or downsizing, need to sell for financial reasons, etc.). So, there

are undocumented immigrant families renting property in the Riverside neighborhood for longer than the average U.S. family owns one home. As for addressing the real issue of renter involvement, additional research has shown that renters are more likely to engage in community development efforts when they have some sense of security that they will be able to afford to stay in the neighborhood (i.e. those who live with rent control).

These broad ideas on altering the dominant discourse on *who gets involved* and w*hy they get involved* can have direct implications for planners today. By studying such phenomena, planners can better identify their target groups for public participation outreach (such as undocumented housewife renters in East Riverside).

Revisiting the East Riverside Case

The East Riverside Corridor Master Plan lists a number of outreach methods employed by the public relations consultant to notify the Hispanic community about the plan's official public participation phase. This was mostly carried out through Spanish media-outlet (i.e. radio & television news releases and interviews), Spanish flyers to utility owners and schools, and publicity at a local "Univision"-sponsored Hispanic event. Partnership with local non-profits was also listed as an outreach method, but the organizations cited (Casa Marianella, Posada Esperanza), while providing an essential service to Austin's immigrant community, are not an appropriate choice. They are not located in the study area, and their target clientele, persons who are essentially homeless and in transition, or women who are escaping unsafe situations, are not representative of

the Hispanic population in East Riverside. Nor are they likely to have any interest in prioritizing neighborhood or master planning. Partnerships with organizations that serve the population living in the study area's affordable housing complexes would have been much more appropriate, and perhaps shown more return.

Since a Master Plan like the ERCMP has the budgetary capacity to hire various consultant groups, some consideration could have been given to hiring a temporary community liaison for a component of the Hispanic outreach efforts. The city could have reduced the budgetary allocation for the Hispanic outreach Public Relations firm that provided translation services and large-scale media in order to accommodate a community liaison with grassroots methods. Some of the undocumented women I spoke with suggested to me that having someone who represented the city knock on their door and explain to them about the plan would have been an effective means in raising their awareness. While this seems like a massive endeavor, it does *not* mean that planners have to knock on every single door in the study area. Since results of participation indicated an extreme under-representation of low-income, renters and Hispanics, why couldn't the city have selected specific apartment complexes for a door-to-door surveying of individuals? (Assuming, of course, that there was a culturally sensitive liaison team in place to carry out such a task). Such an approach may seem radically biased, but not nearly as much once one admits to the fact that other methods of garnering participation (public meetings in English, internet surveys) are themselves exclusive by nature.

A Hispanic outreach community liaison would not have been a too far-fetched concept for the ERCMP, considering the study area is nearly 60% Hispanic. A grassroots facilitator could have been able to coordinate with local churches and schools as well as with University of Texas professors or graduate students with research interests in the area. Such an approach would require employing more qualitative methods of gaining participation and input, something that planners are often limited in due to political constraints.

In addition, Hispanic outreach for the ERCMP could have framed the purposes of the meetings in a ways that targeted the interests and concerns of the area's low-income immigrant population. As brought up by the planners, and apparent through my own interaction with immigrant women, the concepts of long-term planning and public regulatory powers versus private sector development may be foreign to this population. Issues of urban design may not be a priority for a family that is just trying to make rent and put food on the table. But concepts of encroaching development, rising rents, and displacement, hit very near home for them. Outreach that highlights such neighborhood issues (even if it is impersonal media) is much more likely to be noticed and garner interest. Owing to the political climate under which it was commissioned, the ERCMP was constrained to deal primarily with issues of mobility, land use, urban design, etc., and *not* issues of gentrification, displacement, and affordability. It is not surprising therefore, that the interests of property owners dominated the public participation phase of the project. As noted in Chapter 2, inclusive efforts need the support of city officials

and departments that planners work under, and the ERCMP was never framed in a context of affordable housing preservation, but rather in one of urban design and transit.

Suggestions for Further Research

A follow-up study on the group of women who are organizing their neighbors in the East Riverside neighborhood could shed more light on the dynamics of immigrant involvement in planning. Issues of how planners and organizers maintain the momentum among such groups during a long-term planning process would go one step further. In addition, exploring the issues of empowerment and newly emerging political roles among these women could contribute greatly to suggestions on how U.S. entities can better incorporate immigrants. A more extensive look at Austin's immigrant civil society and the political environment it operates in would be of particular use to Austin planners interested in networking opportunities. Finally, a survey of current participatory planning and immigrant outreach programs in cities throughout the U.S. could identify and evaluate any existing liaison-type outreach. This final suggestion is a logical next-step to incorporating some of the recommendations put forth by this report.

Appendix A

Guide for Group Interview: Austin City Planners

Planners were provided with the following questions before my group meeting with them. The questions gave the planners a basic context for my research and allowed them to facilitate much of the meeting on their own.

1. To begin, could you share with me your job/role in the city planning process?
2. What mechanisms do you use to notify the public of planning processes?
3. What are some of the methods you use to engage the public and get their contributions/feedback at public meetings/workshops?
4. What are the typical demographics represented in public planning meetings?
5. Do you think that the city's Spanish-speaking immigrant population is adequately represented in public planning meetings? Why or why not? (Why do you perceive that they do/do not participate?)
6. In what ways have you reached out specifically to the Spanish speaking/immigrant population?
7. What do you see as the potential advantages as well as drawbacks to involving immigrants in the planning process? (What are the political obstacles that might prevent planners from actively seeking representation for this community?)
8. Can you discuss the possible benefits and challenges of collaborating with immigrant advocacy groups in order to better integrate immigrants into the planning process?

Appendix B

Guide for Semi-Structured Interviews: Immigrant Women

Immigrant women were interviewed individually in their homes. I used the following guide to facilitate our conversation. The Introduction includes a script that I used to inform them further about the project and further emphasize their rights as participants, on top of the Introduction and Informed Consent used in the Parent Study Interview.

Introduction

Thank you for your participation in this study. I am interested in knowing your perspectives about planning in the city where you live, and the ways in which you have or have not been involved in this process. I am a Masters student in the Community and Regional Planning program at UT, and I am very interested in how to better include low-income individuals, especially immigrants, in our community. The purpose of this study is to listen, very informally, to your perspectives (your ideas, suggestions, fears, thoughts, etc.). Your identity will be confidential and will not appear in my final report. Basically, my goal is to collect your ideas and those of other members of the community, in order to understand how planners could better include you. Are you ready to begin our conversation?

Background/Civic Participation

1. How long have you lived in Austin?
2. What part of Mexico are you from? What did you do there?
3. Did you attend school in Mexico? What grade level did you reach?
4. In Mexico, did you participate in any kind of club, association, or political activity (for example, a neighborhood association, city-wide political campaign, etc.)? Did your husband or other members of your family participate in such activities?
5. Would you consider yourself part of a group here in Austin (it could be an informal group of friends, or something more formal, like a Parent-Teacher Association, or a church group)?
6. Do you feel included in the politics and activities of the City of Austin? Those of your neighborhood?

7. How do acquaintances treat you when they know that you are undocumented (for example, the apartment management personnel)?

Involvement in Planning Process

8. What do you think about the changes that are happening in your neighborhood?

9. Would you like to have a voice in how your own neighborhood changes and develops? Do you think that Hispanic immigrants should have a voice in what is happening? Why?

10. Have you received announcements about public meetings for the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan?

11. Did you attend the meetings? Why or why not?

12. Are you afraid to attend a public meeting or speak up in a public meeting? Why? How has your perspective on this changed in the time that you have been here in Austin?

13. Is there a space where you would feel more comfortable or safer in expressing your ideas or your viewpoint (for example, your children's school, your church, or city hall)?

14. What are the reasons that people in your community don't attend public meetings held by the City, or don't form neighborhood associations? What are the things that make it difficult for them to do so?

15. Who from the immigrant community would be the most available and willing to participation in this kind of civic activity (for example, women, adolescents, day laborers, etc.)? Why? Is this different than the way it is in Mexico?

Further Ideas/Suggestions

16. What could the City do to better publicize/share information with the Hispanic immigrant community here in Austin? What could they do to more directly invite their participation? Through whom?

17. What would the ideal meeting look like for you (for example, where, what time, etc.)?

18. What services would you like the City to provide in these meetings?

Appendix C

Summary of East Riverside Plan Outreach Efforts

May 2008: East Riverside Corridor Master Planning Project commenced

- Contract signed with A. Nelessen Associates to provide consultant services for the E. Riverside Corridor Master Plan.

July 8,2008: First Stakeholder Meeting

- English/Spanish postal mail and email invitations sent out to 160 stakeholders, including all members of the East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Association Contact Team, Montopolis-area residents (Montopolis did not have a Neighborhood Association or Contact team at that time), other area residents, business owners and developers. In addition, groups that had a vested interest in particular parts of the plan were also invited, such as affordable housing, bicycling, and transportation advocates.
- Approximately 70 people attended the meeting.

August 14, 2008: Stakeholder meeting "Beta-Test" for Community Visioning Workshop

- English/Spanish email invitations sent to all stakeholders invited to first stakeholder meeting, as well as any additional persons who attended the first meeting.
- Approximately 60 people attended the meeting.

September 17, 2008: PUBLIC MEETING- Community Visioning Workshop

- Meeting postponed by 4 days due to the potential threat of Hurricane Ike
- 12,318 English/Spanish postcards sent to all utility customers and property owners within 300 feet of the planning area.
- English/Spanish email invitations sent to all people who had attended previous meetings and those on the East Riverside Corridor interest list
- New releases sent to English and Spanish media outlets, including radio, television, online and print media.
- English and Spanish radio and television interviews.
- Approximately 80 people attended the meeting.

September 18 through October 20 2008: Visual Preference Survey online

- Approximately 450 people completed the online survey

November 18, 2008: PUBLIC MEETING- Presentation of Concept Plans ("Did We Get It Right?")

- 14,669 English/Spanish postcards sent to all utility customers and property owners within 500 feet of the planning area, and on the interest list.
- 6,650 English/Spanish flyers distributed to 9 area schools, 8 churches, 2 civic institutions, and 17 businesses.
- Publicized event at "Univisión's "En Su Comunidad" at Furia Discoteca, 2237 E. Riverside, on 11/14
- English/Spanish email invitations sent to all people who had attended previous meetings and those on the East Riverside Corridor interest list.
- News releases sent to English and Spanish media outlets, including radio, television, online and print media
- English and Spanish radio and television interviews
- Approximately 160 people attended the meeting.

June 11, 2009: June 2009 version of the Draft Plan available

- Plan was posted on website and available at library and One Texas Center, and feedback form was available online until July 9, 2009.

June 25, 2009: PUBLIC MEETING- Draft Master Plan Public Presentation

- 14,744English/Spanish postcards sent to all utility customers and property owners within 500 feet of the planning area, and to those on the interest list.
- 6,700 English/Spanish flyers distributed to 16 area schools, 8 churches, 4 civic institutions, and 10 businesses.
- Partnered with non-profits (e.g. Posada Esperanza, Casa Marianella) to publicize the event among Spanish-speaking residents
- English/Spanish email invitations sent to all people who had attended previous meetings and those on the East Riverside Corridor interest list
- New releases sent to English and Spanish media outlets
- Approximately 80 people attended the meeting.

August 13, 2009: August 2009 version of Draft Plan available

- Updated plan and summary of significant changes from June 2009 draft were posted on website and available at library and One Texas Center

August 18, 2009: Codes and Ordinances Subcommittee of the Planning Commission

- Agenda item to discuss amending the Land Development Code (LDC) Chapter 25-2 Subchapter E: Design Standards and Mixed Use to reclassify East Riverside Drive between Pleasant Valley Road and Highway 71/Ben White Boulevard from an Urban Roadway to a Core Transit Corridor.
- Commissioners Sullivan, Chimenti, and Reddy attended the meeting.
- 3 members of the public attended the meeting.

August 19, 2009: Neighborhood Planning Subcommittee of the Planning Commission

- Agenda item to discuss the East Riverside Corridor Master Plan for potential consideration at the September 22, 2009 Planning Commission Hearing.
- Commissioners Kirk, Chimenti, Small and Sullivan attended the meeting.
- 20 members of the public attended the meeting.

September 10, 2009: Meeting with Montopolis Neighborhood Association Contact Team

- 7 people attended the meeting

September 15, 2009: Meeting with East Riverside Oltorf Combined Neighborhood Association Contact Team

- 7 people attended the meeting

September 15, 2009: Meeting with East Riverside residents at Metz Elementary

- 28 people attended the meeting

Appendix D

Austin Immigrant Social Service Organizations Websites

Manos de Cristo
http://www.manosdecristo.org/

La Fuente Learning Center
http://www.fuenteaustin.org/

El Buen Samaritano
http://www.elbuen.org/

Lifeworks
http://www.lifeworksaustin.org

Caritas
http://www.caritasofaustin.org/

Casa Marianella/Posada Esperanza
http://www.casamarianella.org/

Safe Place
http://www.safeplace.org

Worker's Defense Project/Projecto Defensa Laboral
http://www.workersdefense.org/

Central Texas Immigrant Worker Rights Center
http://www.equaljusticecenter.org/

Catholic Charities of Central Texas Immigration Legal Services
http://www.ccctx.org/

Immigration Clinic University of Texas School of Law
http://www.utexas.edu/law/academics/clinics/immigration/

Immigration Counseling and Outreach Services (I.C.O.S.)
None

American Gateways (formerly Political Asylum Project of Austin—PAPA)
http://www.americangateways.org/

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VITA

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